



Funk vs. Lothario: **HOW TERRY FUNK DEFEATED HIMSELF**

March 1977

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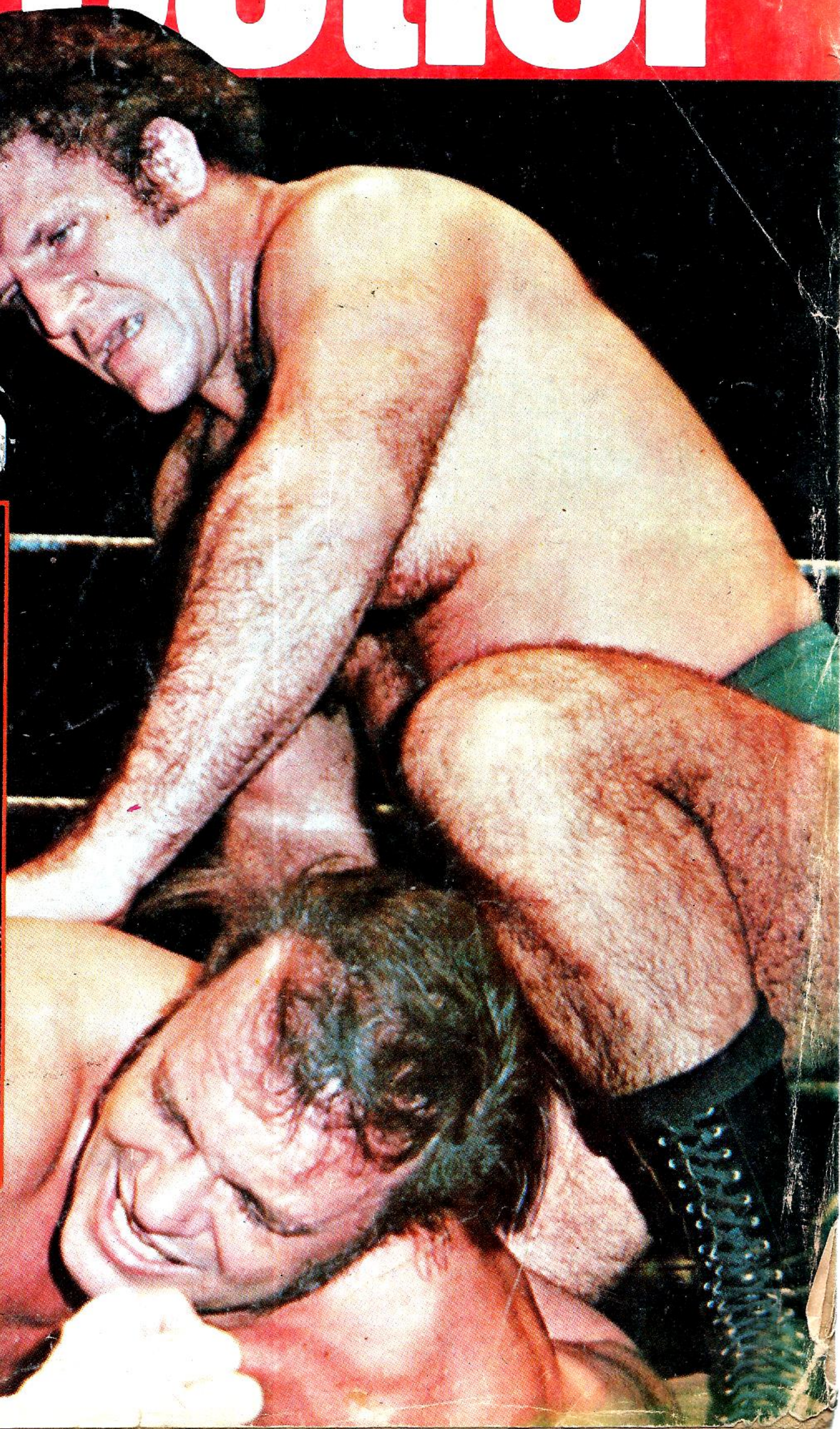
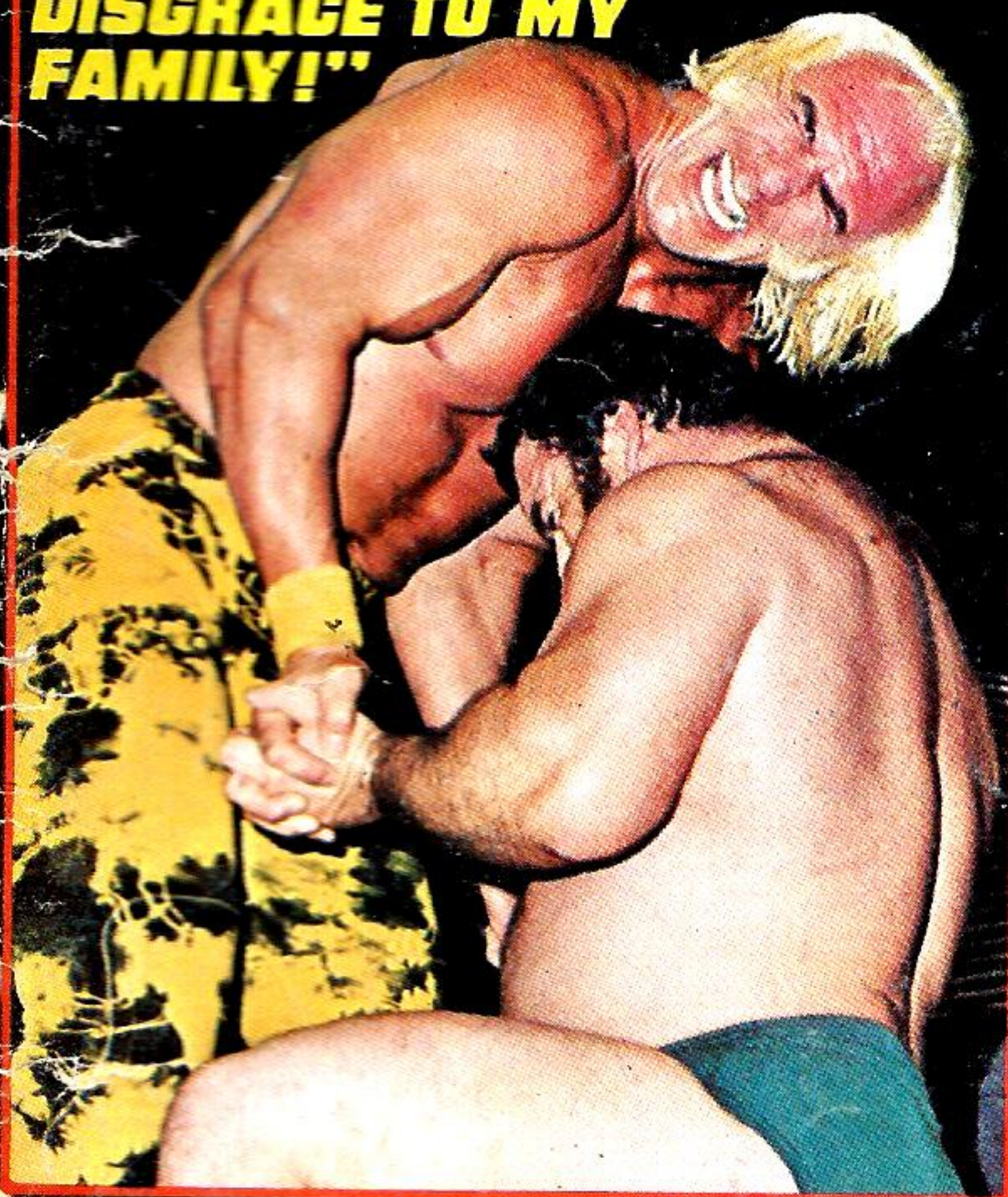
THE
WRESTLER

Wrestler

WHY STAN STASIAK SPARED BRUNO SAMMARTINO

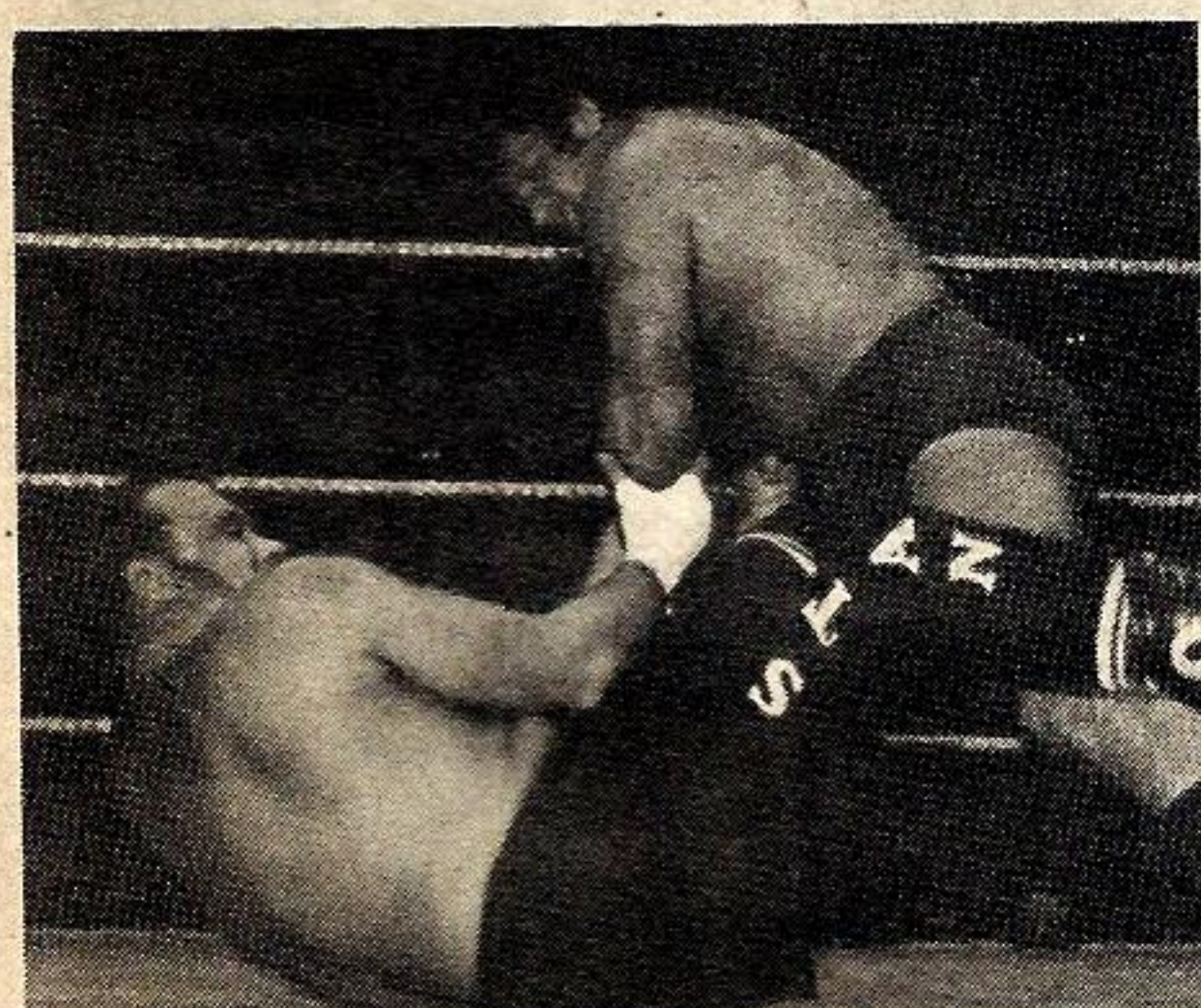
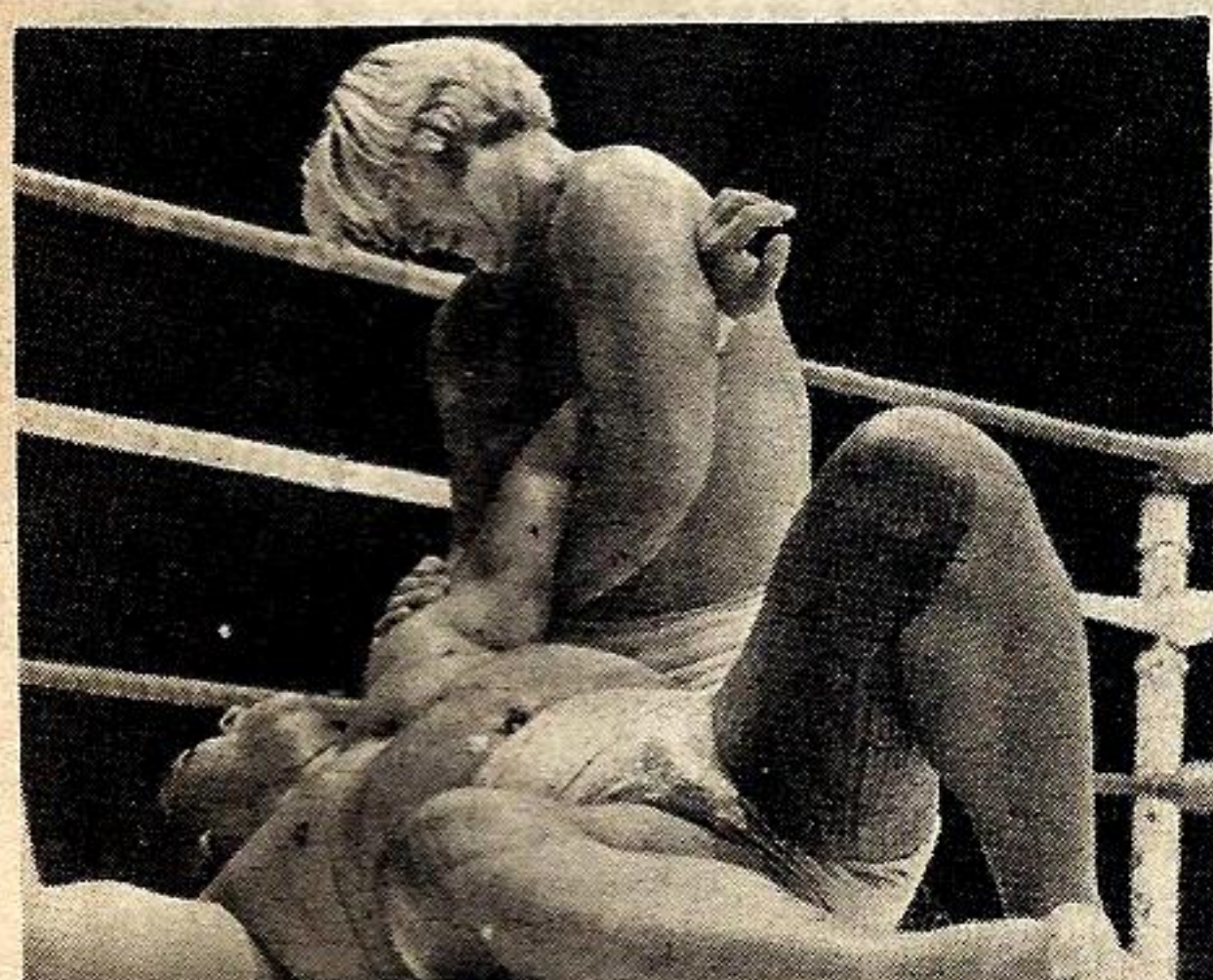
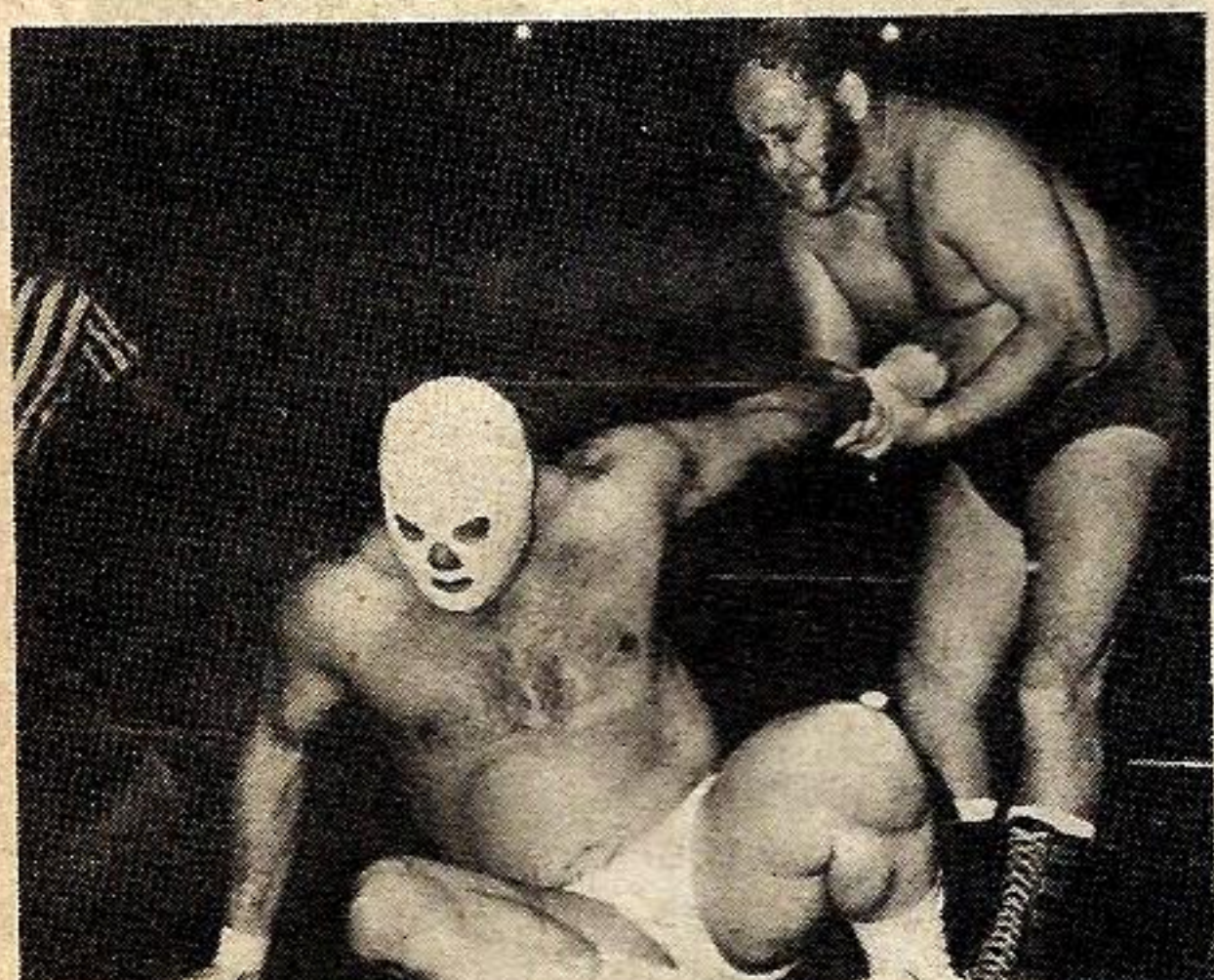
Mike Graham's Heartbreaking Confession:

"SUPERSTAR GRAHAM IS A DISGRACE TO MY FAMILY!"



Wrestler^{THE}

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STAFF

STANLEY WESTON
PRESIDENT AND PUBLISHER

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF	Peter King
MANAGING EDITOR	Robert J. Thornton
ASSISTANT EDITOR	Bill Apter
ASSOCIATE EDITORS	Dan Shocket
.....	Randy Gordon
.....	Michael B. Kape
CHIEF, PRODUCTION	Karl Hlavac
ART DIRECTOR	Kenneth Morgan
ART STAFF	Anne Marie Mascia
.....	Hubert Patrick
PHOTOGRAPHERS	Theo Ehret
.....	Tony Lanza
.....	Bob Sabre

OFFICIAL WRESTLING RATINGS

WORLD WIDE WRESTLING FEDERATION

CHAMPION: BRUNO SAMMARTINO

- 1—KEN PATERA
- 2—STAN STASIAK
- 3—BARON VON RASCHKE
- 4—NIKOLAI VOLKOFF
- 5—STAN HANSEN
- 6—BOBO BRAZIL
- 7—IVAN PUTSKI
- 8—BRUISER BRODIE
- 9—CHIEF JAY STRONGBOW
- 10—BOB BACKLUND

AMERICAN WRESTLING ASSOCIATION

CHAMPION: NICK BOCKWINKLE

- 1—VERNE GAGNE
- 2—BILL ROBINSON
- 3—LARRY HENNIG
- 4—PETER MAIVIA
- 5—RAY STEVENS
- 6—PEDRO MORALES
- 7—BARON VON RASCHKE
- 8—GREG GAGNE
- 9—JIM BRUNZELL
- 10—CHRIS TAYLOR

MOST POPULAR WRESTLERS

- 1—ANDRE THE GIANT
- 2—BRUNO SAMMARTINO
- 3—MIL MASCARAS
- 4—MR. WRESTLING II
- 5—DUSTY RHODES
- 6—MIGHTY IGOR
- 7—WAHOO McDANIEL
- 8—CHIEF JAY STRONGBOW
- 9—ROCKY JOHNSON
- 10—IVAN PUTSKI

NATIONAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE

CHAMPION: TERRY FUNK

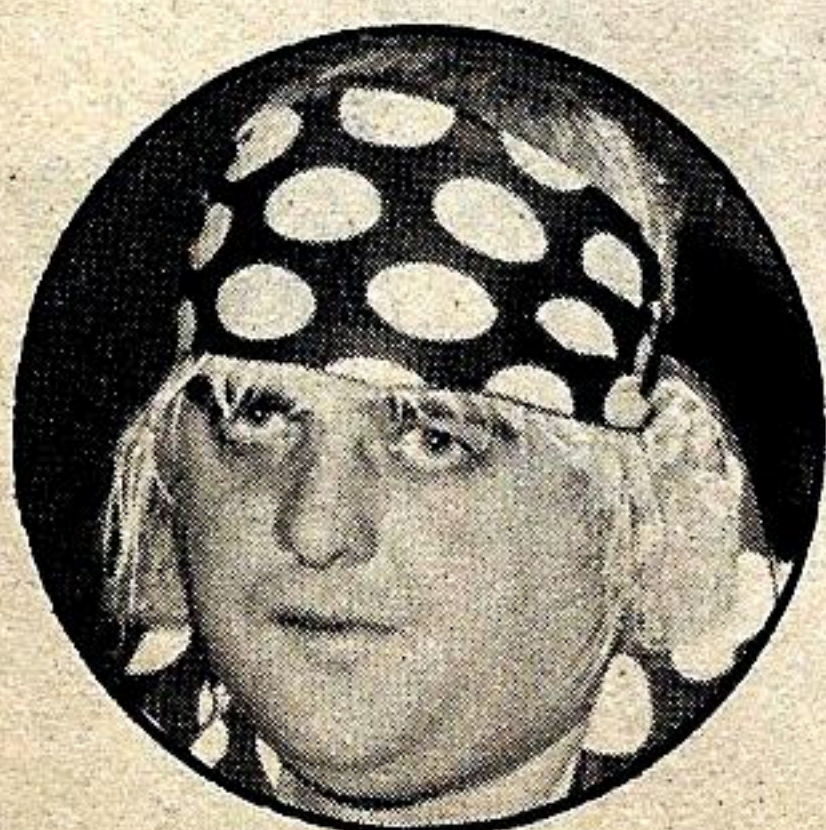
- 1—DUSTY RHODES
- 2—JACK BRISCO
- 3—MR. WRESTLING II
- 4—SUPERSTAR GRAHAM
- 5—PAUL JONES
- 6—THE SHEIK
- 7—HARLEY RACE
- 8—RIC FLAIR
- 9—ROCKY JOHNSON
- 10—JERRY LAWLER

TAG TEAMS

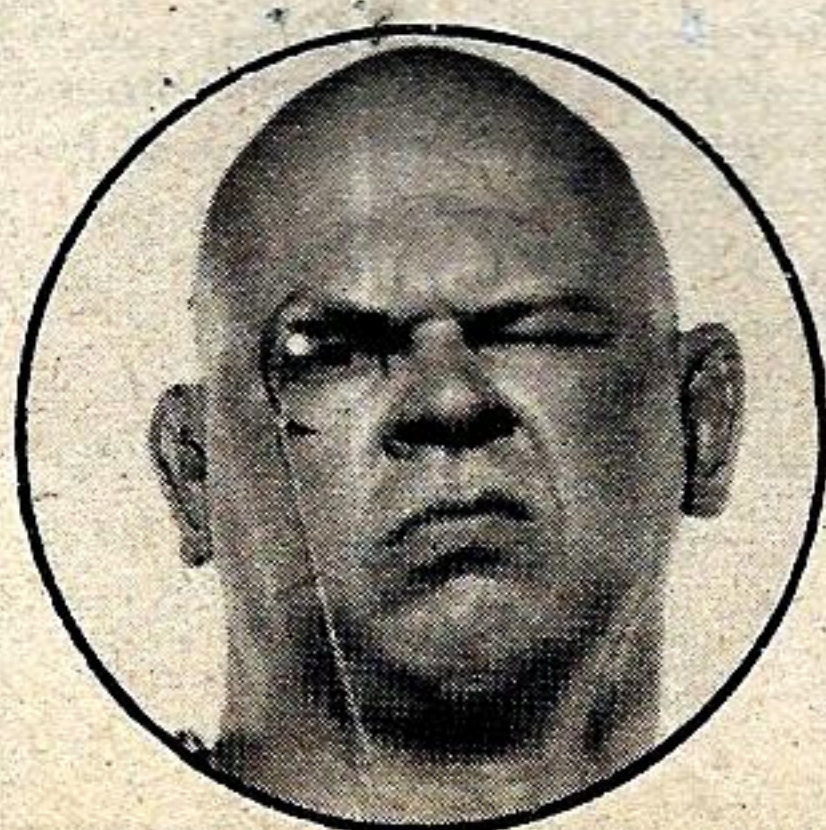
- 1—THE ANDERSON BROTHERS
- 2—CHIEF JAY STRONGBOW & BILLY WHITE WOLF
- 3—BOBBY DUNCUM & BLACKJACK LANZA
- 4—GOLIATH & BLACK GORDMAN
- 5—THE VALIANT BROTHERS
- 6—THE EXECUTIONERS
- 7—GREG GAGNE & JIM BRUNZELL
- 8—THE HOLLYWOOD BLONDS
- 9—MIKE GRAHAM & KEN LUCAS
- 10—THE ROYAL KANGAROOS

MOST HATED WRESTLERS

- 1—ABDULLAH THE BUTCHER
- 2—THE SHEIK
- 3—TOR KAMATA
- 4—STAN HANSEN
- 5—BARON VON RASCHKE
- 6—STAN STASIAK
- 7—SUPERSTAR GRAHAM
- 8—NICK BOCKWINKLE
- 9—MR. FUJI
- 10—THE ASSASSIN



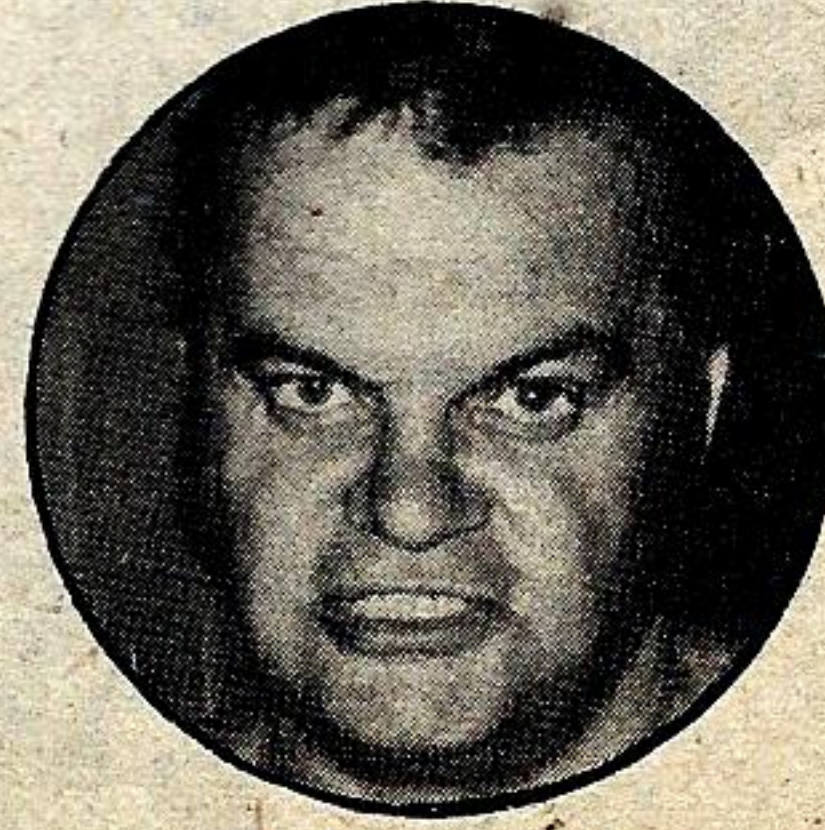
DUSTY RHODES



BARON VON RASCHKE



RAY STEVENS



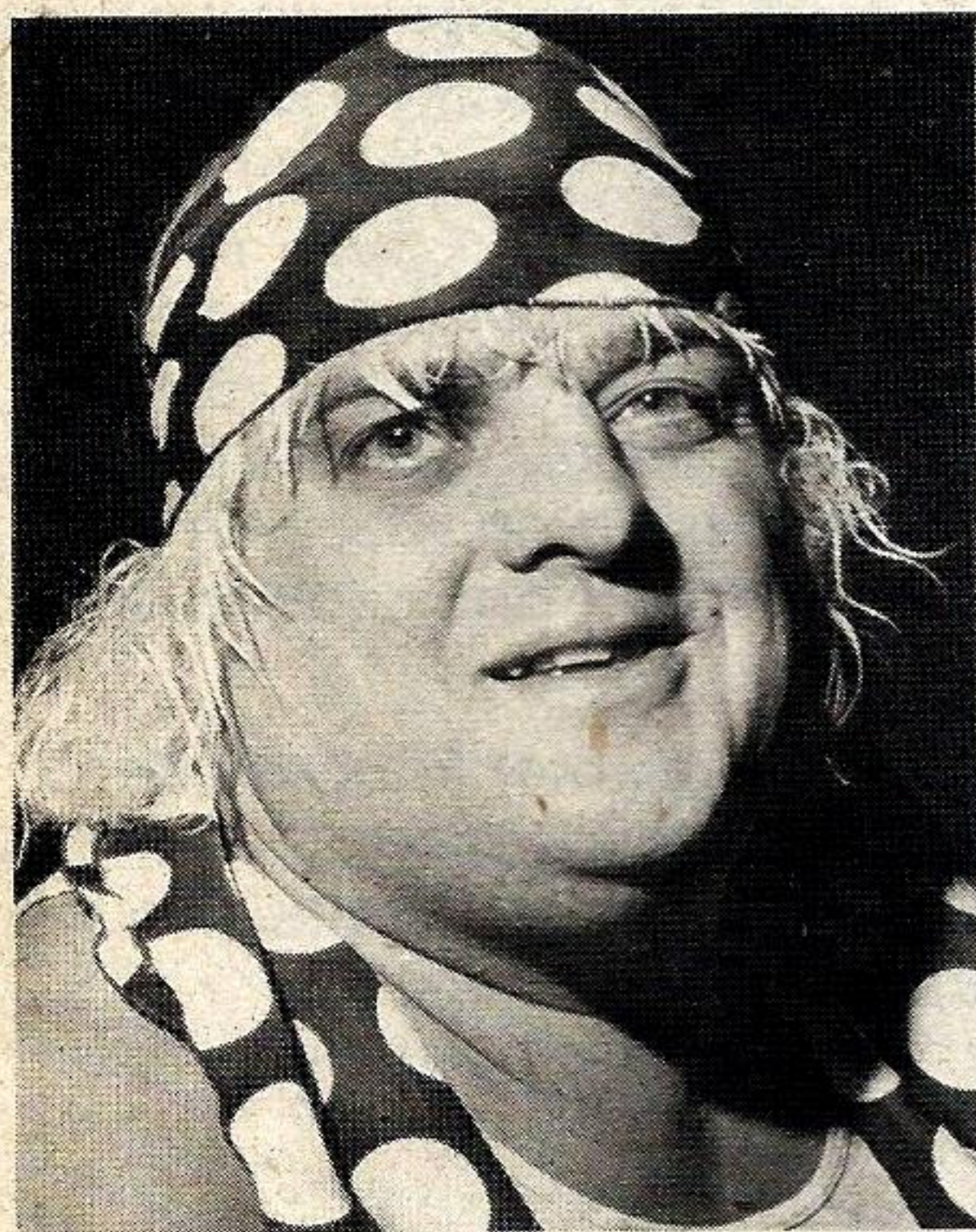
STAN STASIAK

HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING, BABY!

By Bill Apter

PITY JOSE LOTHARIO. He may be in more trouble now than he has ever been in before. He made just one fateful mistake—he decided to place his trust in Gary Hart. And he may pay dearly for this.

Lothario's problems started a while back when he accepted Gary Hart as his manager. Hart had convinced Jose he had changed his evil ways and wanted to manage only scientific wrestlers. At first Lothario was reluctant to believe Hart, and for good reason. In the past, the manager has had some of the most ruthless men in the sport under his guidance.



Dusty Rhodes: His Florida title defense against Superstar Graham was a losing one.

But this time Gary seemed quite sincere, so Jose chose to believe him and signed Hart on as his manager. A few weeks later, Lothario was forced to face the consequences of his poor decision: Hart tore up his contract and opted to manage Jose's arch rivals, Black Gordman and Goliath.

"This is the worst thing that has ever happened to me," said Jose. "Hart knows what I can do and what I can't do. He knows my best maneuvers and

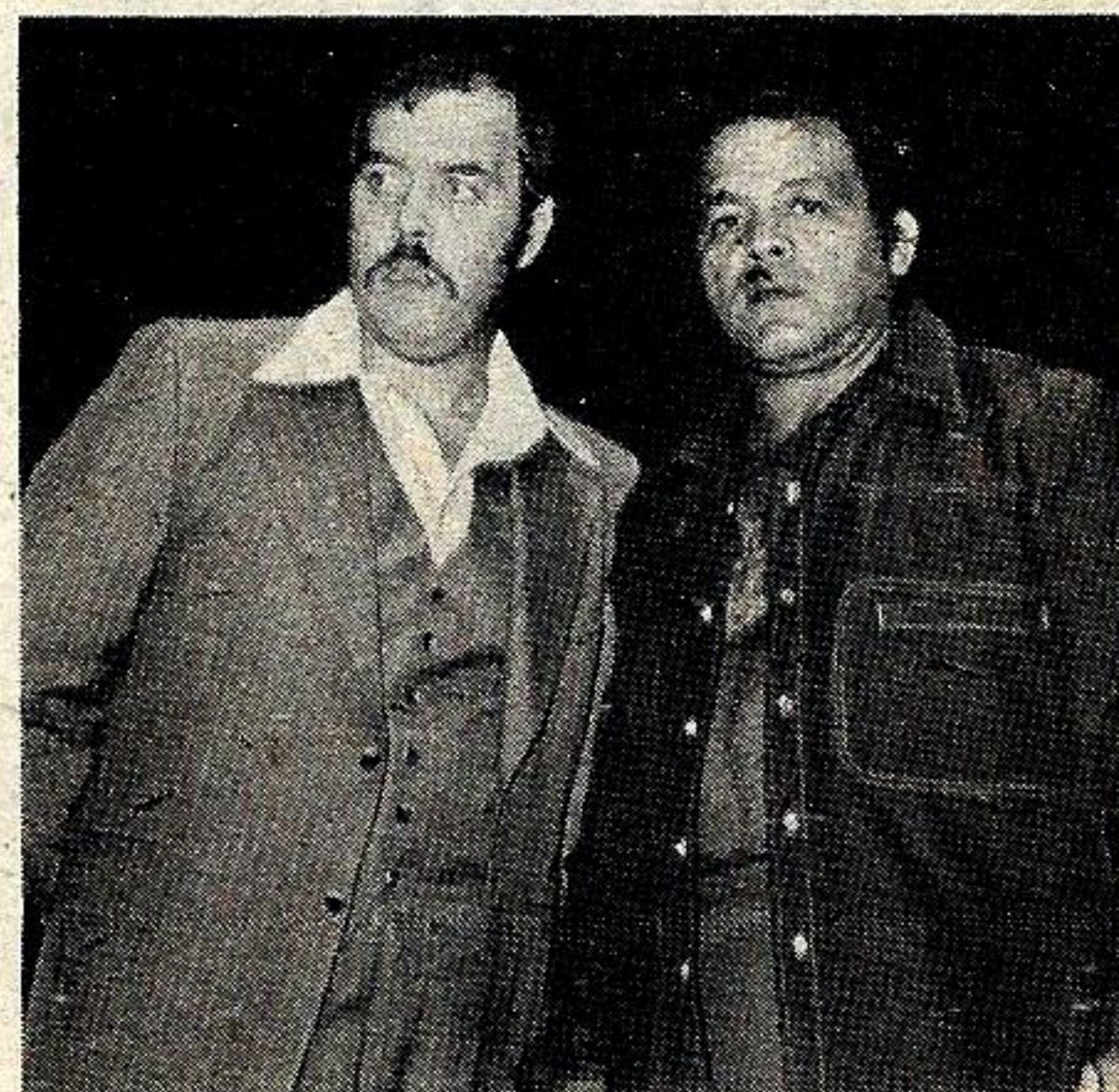
my methods of execution. Now he is going to teach this all to Gordman and Goliath. I want to kick myself every time I think of how I trusted Gary Hart!"

In one of the bloodiest battles ever seen in that area, Superstar Billy Graham forced Dusty Rhodes to surrender the Florida State Title. After the title match, Superstar told reporters, "I always said I was the best, daddy. Tonight, I've proven just that. I think I'll hold on to this title for a long, long time, or at least until I get bored with the weak competition!"

Many people are surprised with the change in Ken Patera. He has moved to the Northeast and adopted cruelly illegal tactics. His latest victim was young Johnny Rivera. As for his future plans, the former Olympic star says simply, "I want Bruno Sammartino's title."

Fans in Georgia had something to worry about recently. It appeared Dick Slater had won that state's championship from Mr. Wrestling II. However, the controversy soon was dispelled when a ringside official noticed Dick had his foot on the ropes while the referee was counting the pin. Immediately the decision was reversed, and Mr. Wrestling II was allowed to keep his title. Slater claims he was robbed; that "Wrestling II bribed the official to make sure I didn't win the match."

In a recent battle against Pete Sanchez, Kevin Sullivan began to use some rather questionable tactics. When asked about this, the young man said, "My first priority is to win the match. My second is to stay within the rules." This is a very unhappy turn of events. Kevin could lose a lot of his fans this way . . . Guess who went to China recently? Bobby Heenan, "looking for some new people to add to my talented stable of wrestlers." At least that's what he said . . . NWA champion Terry Funk will be facing some tough competition for his title soon: Jimmy



Lothario and Hart: Their friendship is over and Hart plans to make life miserable for Jose!

Snuka, Jess Ventura, and Don Leo Jonathan, to name a few . . . Tim "Mr. Wrestling" Woods has also been promised a chance at Funk's title in the near future.

Speaking of Terry Funk, a prominent statistician has compiled some interesting facts about the NWA champion. On the average, Funk loses 71.42% of his title matches by disqualification! In non-title matches, Terry's record is even worse: he loses 81.86% of his non-title battles. These are rather shabby figures for a champion, no matter who he is.

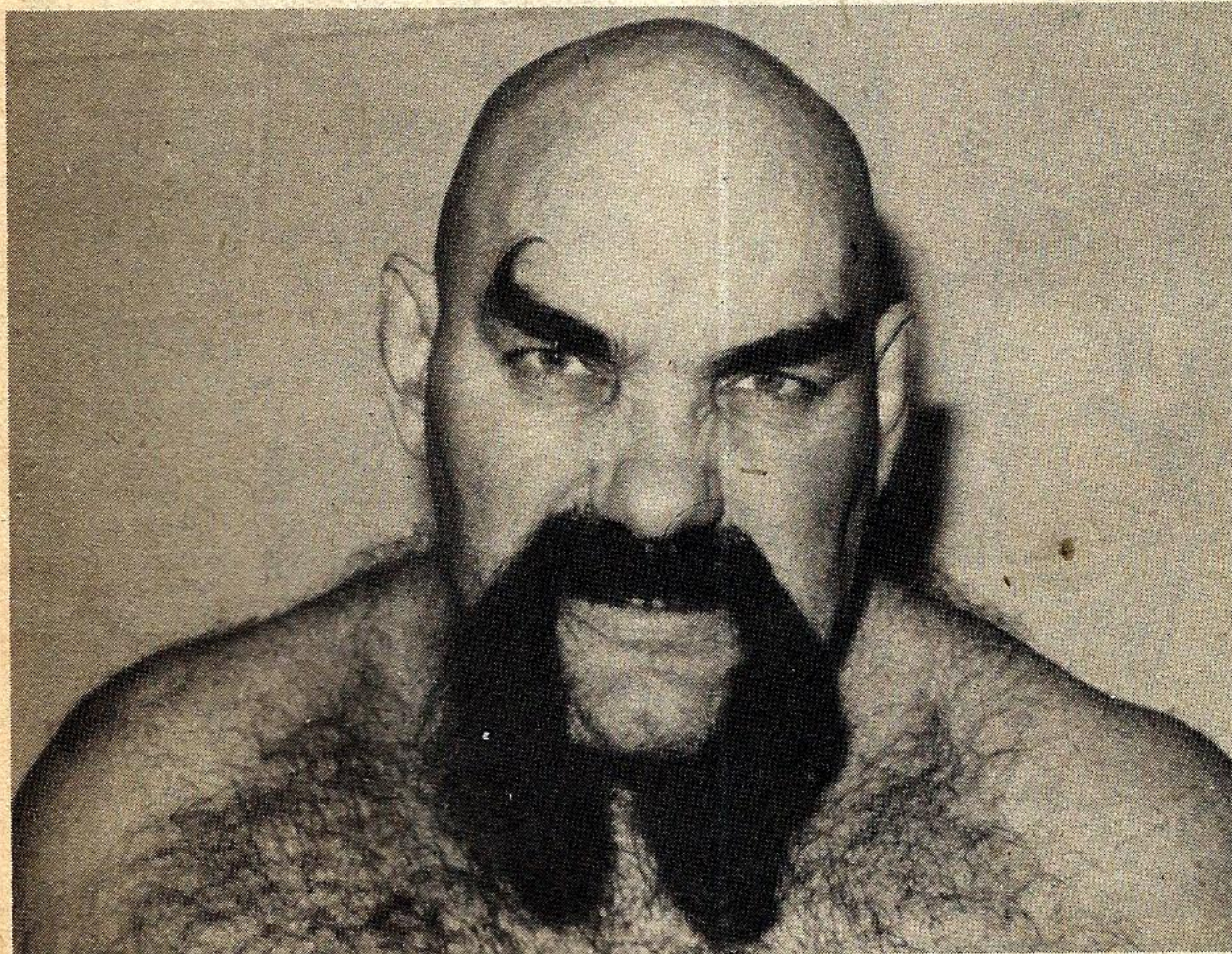
The continuing saga of the Fabulous Kangaroos: When this famous team was first formed, it consisted of Al Costello and Ray Hefferman. In more recent years, Costello and Don Kent made up the team. But these two split a while back, and Costello went into managing other wrestlers—until recently.

At a formal press conference Costello announced, "Tony Charles has agreed to become my latest partner. The Fabulous Kangaroos will soon dominate wrestling again. This time, I believe, we will be greater than ever before."

There's some good news for Mil
(Continued from Page 52)

YOU ASKED US

Here's the monthly feature which YOU get to write! It's your chance to have a top wrestler answer YOUR question! Only the best questions will be answered—so put on your thinking caps and come up with some good ones! Address your questions—and who you would like to have answer them—to: **YOU ASKED US, c/o THE WRESTLER, PO Box 58, Rockville Centre, N.Y. 11571. Questions will be answered only in this column and at our discretion!**



Ox Baker didn't think much of Bobo Brazil before the two engaged in combat. Now that they have, Baker says his opinion of Bobo is lower than it was before! Ox says, "Brazil is the worst wrestler I have ever faced!"

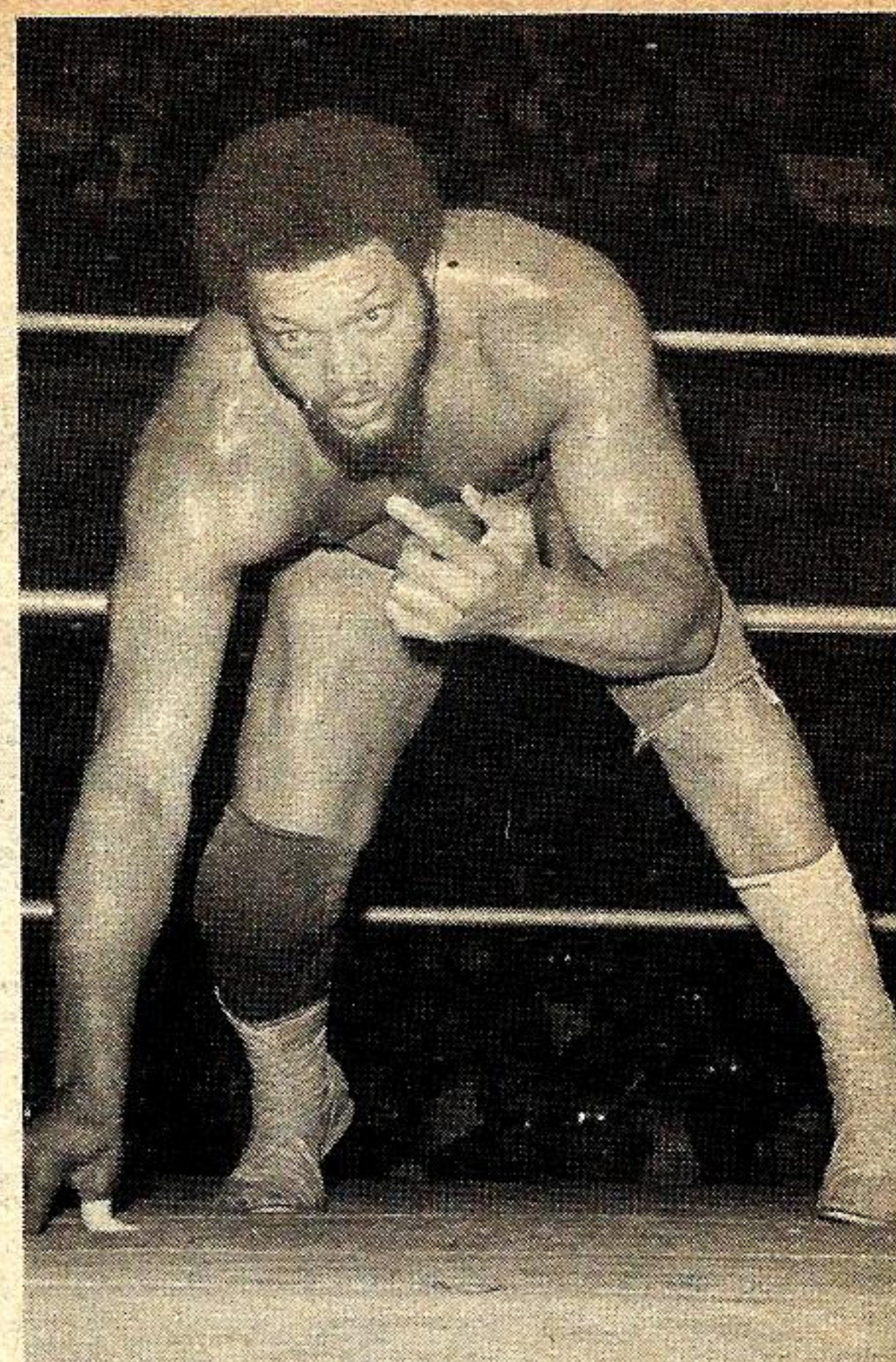
Q: Why don't you let the cat out of the bag already and show us a photo of The Executioners unmasked!—Lenny Cowan, Lorain, Ohio

A: Captain Lou Albano sent us a photo which he claims are The Executioners *UNMASKED!* See This month's edition of *INSIDE*

WRESTLING, page 22.

Q: Where is the "Big Cat" Ernie Ladd wrestling?—Bruno Bettelheim, Cleveland, Ohio

A: Ernie recently returned from a lengthy stay in Australia and is now making his presence known to rule abiding wrestlers in the Michigan area.



Ernie Ladd is wrestling in Detroit, and wrestlers who abide by the rules are sorry for that!

Q: How many different wrestlers call themselves "the king of wrestling"?—Robert Jones, Newport News, Virginia

A: Several, Robert. Ernie Ladd, Rufus R. Jones and Jerry Lawler, just to name a few.

Q: Why doesn't Mike Graham come to the WWWF to show New York fans all Grahams are not rule-breakers?—Ralph C. Shilling, Pleasant Gap, Pennsylvania

A: Mike Graham *has* wrestled at Madison Square Garden and the fans took to him immediately. Mike hopes to bring his scientific skills to New York again in the near future.

Q: Ox Baker had a low opinion of Bobo Brazil. Now that he has wrestled Bobo, has his opinion changed?—David Booth, Agincourt, Ontario

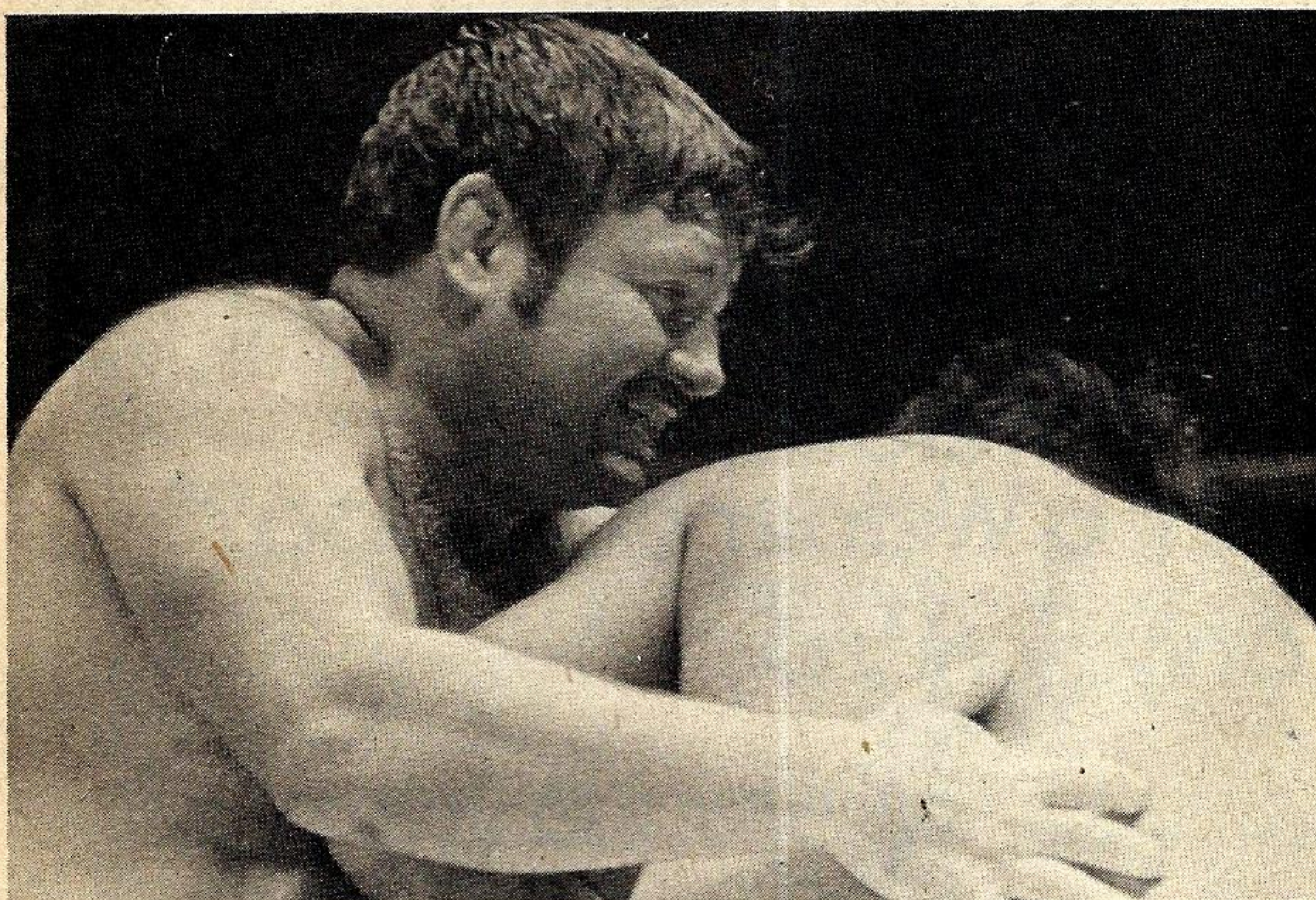
A: "Yes, my opinion has changed!" Baker says. "He's worse than I thought! That guy is no wrestler! He stinks!"

Q: When will Terry Funk give Ron Fuller another shot at the NWA title?—Jeff West, Williamsburg, Kentucky

A: "When he deserves it!" exclaimed Funk. "I did not think he deserved a shot the first time. That is why he lost. The guy is not ready. He is just *not* championship material!"

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CORRESPONDENTS Reports



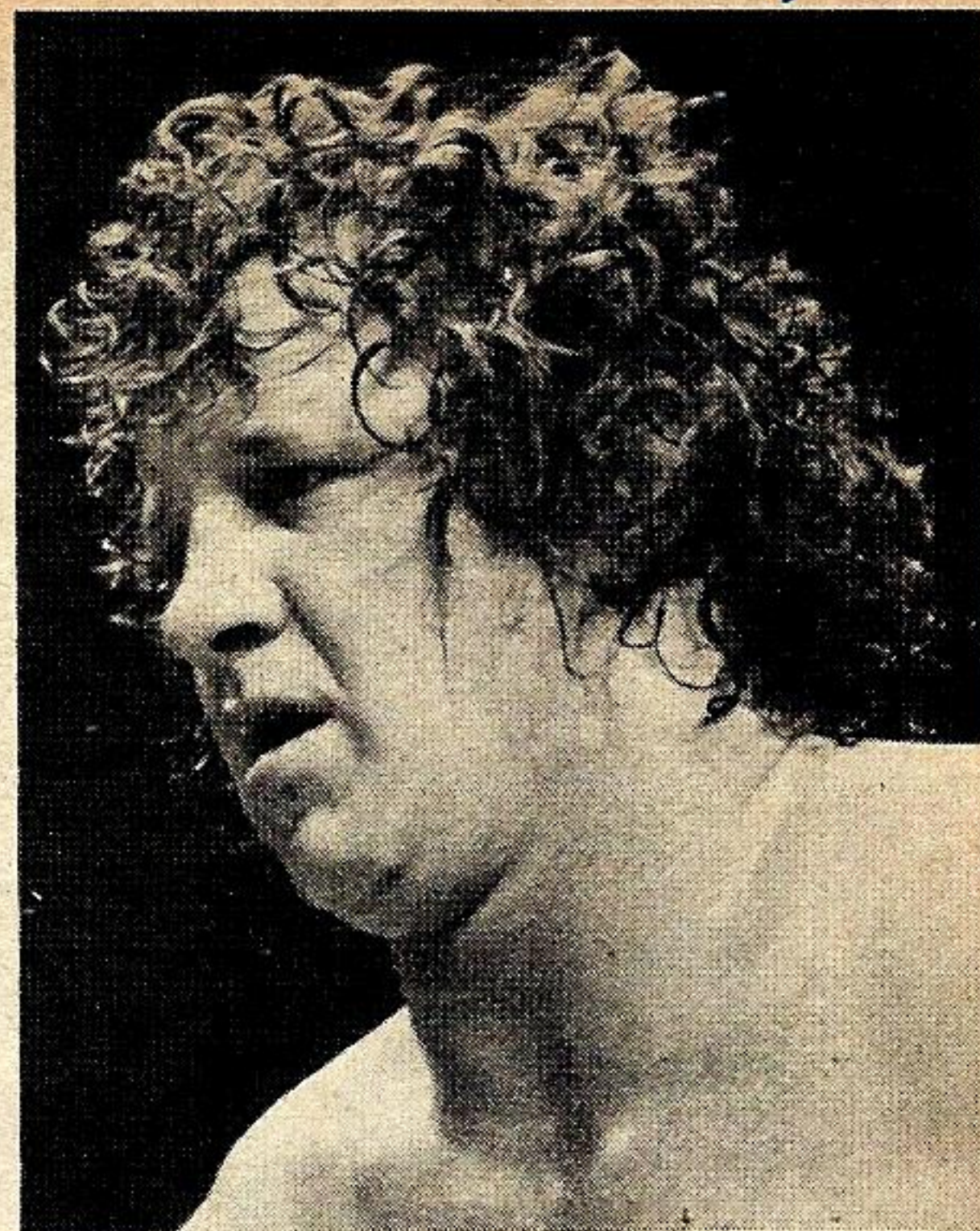
Don Kent proves again and again he's a furious competitor. Against Bobo Brazil, Kent proved he's also not above using a foreign object to win a match. However, Bobo proved too cunning for Kent and disarmed the vicious rulebreaker. The battle ended on a double disqualification.

MICHIGAN MAYHEM By Don Kill

THE WILD MAT WAR between Don Kent, the current U.S. Champion, and former champ Bobo Brazil continues to rage. In their last match, the two warriors brawled with savage fury. Many times, each man gained an advantage, only to be thwarted. Finally, Kent grew impatient and pulled a foreign object out of his trunks. Fortunately for Brazil, Bobo is used to such tactics and was able to disarm Kent. But in doing so, both men toppled from the ring, falling hard to the concrete floor. Neither man could get back in time to prevent being counted out. Since both were disqualified, Kent kept his title. However, Bobo had the satisfaction of knowing he kept the love and respect of the fans.

TORONTO ACTION By Keith Gibbs

In what had to be one of the most remarkable NWA title defenses in his career, Terry Funk conquered Portuguese champion Carlos Rocha. Though the battle lasted only a little over 10 minutes, Terry had a rough time of it. Carlos showed why he has earned the admiration of all who've seen him. His skills almost brought on a stunning upset. In fact, seconds before he lost, Carlos had captured Terry and was about to bodyslam Funk into oblivion. Only an accident (or some subtle maneuver caused by Funk) saved the champion from losing to Rocha. Instead of bodyslamming Terry, Carlos toppled backwards and was finished. It was a close call for NWA champ Funk!



Terry Funk is a beleaguered champion (above). Matches against Carlos Rocha are only one reason why.

PENNSYLVANIA REPORT By Bryan Pflanz

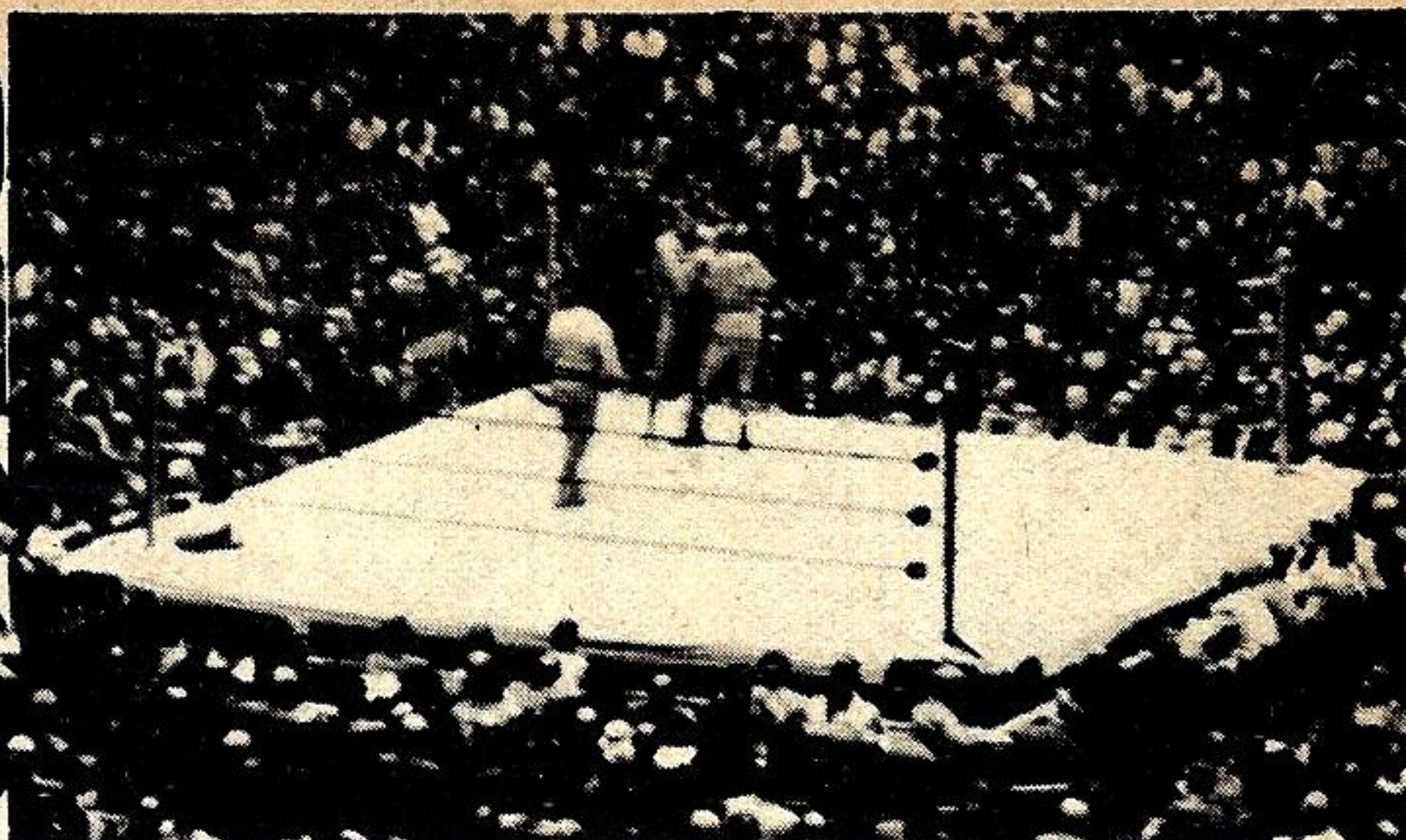
The fans in Philadelphia's Spectrum were treated to a great battle when WWWF champion Bruno Sammartino defended his title against Stan Hansen. It was a lumberjack match with 14 men encircling the ring preventing anyone from escaping. From the beginning, it looked like Bruno would easily take the match. The champion dominated the action. Yet, one can never take Hansen lightly. Stan brilliantly tied Sammartino in the ropes, a move as great as it was cruel. It was the perfect situation for Hansen's lariat and Stan knew it. He charged at Sammartino. Bruno managed to escape at just the right moment, sending Hansen flying over the ropes. When Stan returned to battle, it was only a matter of time before Sammartino finished him off and retained the title.

HOUSTON BATTLING By Doug Creamer

There's a \$5,000 bounty on Jose Lothario's head, courtesy of an enraged Gary Hart. Recently, Black Gordman tried and failed to collect the reward, although he came about as close as possible. In fact, the only thing that saved Jose was an impatient Hart. Jose had been snared by Gordman and was about to lose consciousness. As he lingered, Hart decided to help Gordman finish off his enemy. Unfortunately for the conspirators, Hart rushed so quickly that he collided

(Continued on page 60)

YOUR LETTERS



A NIGHTMARE TRULY

Your article, "Dusty Rhodes: His Title Dream Is Now a Nightmare" (January 1977), really upset me. Like thousands of other fans, I had been led to believe by Dusty's boasting that he would win the NWA title in 1976. How wrong we all were!

Rhodes has proven he is just another wrestler who cannot win the belt from Terry Funk. He is not "The American Dream" he proclaimed himself to be.

As the story so eloquently said, Dusty's title dreams are nightmares now. As time goes on, he is going to lose more and more of the fans he attracted as the bicentennial hope. He has already lost this one.

KATHY GARBER
Orlando, Fla.

in 1977 it will be fine with me. If it doesn't happen until 1978, 1979, or 1980, that will be fine too. All that matters is that one day Dusty Rhodes will be king of the NWA! So let's stop all this fuss about a few minor setbacks. Let us forget about failed dreams and look ahead to the future.

LISA SPENSER
Fort Worth, Tex.

POOR ANDRE

If I didn't know better I would say there is a conspiracy to keep the title away from Andre the Giant. I think many promoters and wrestlers are afraid to let him win the title, and they will use any means they can to prevent him from doing so!

Your article, "Andre Wins the

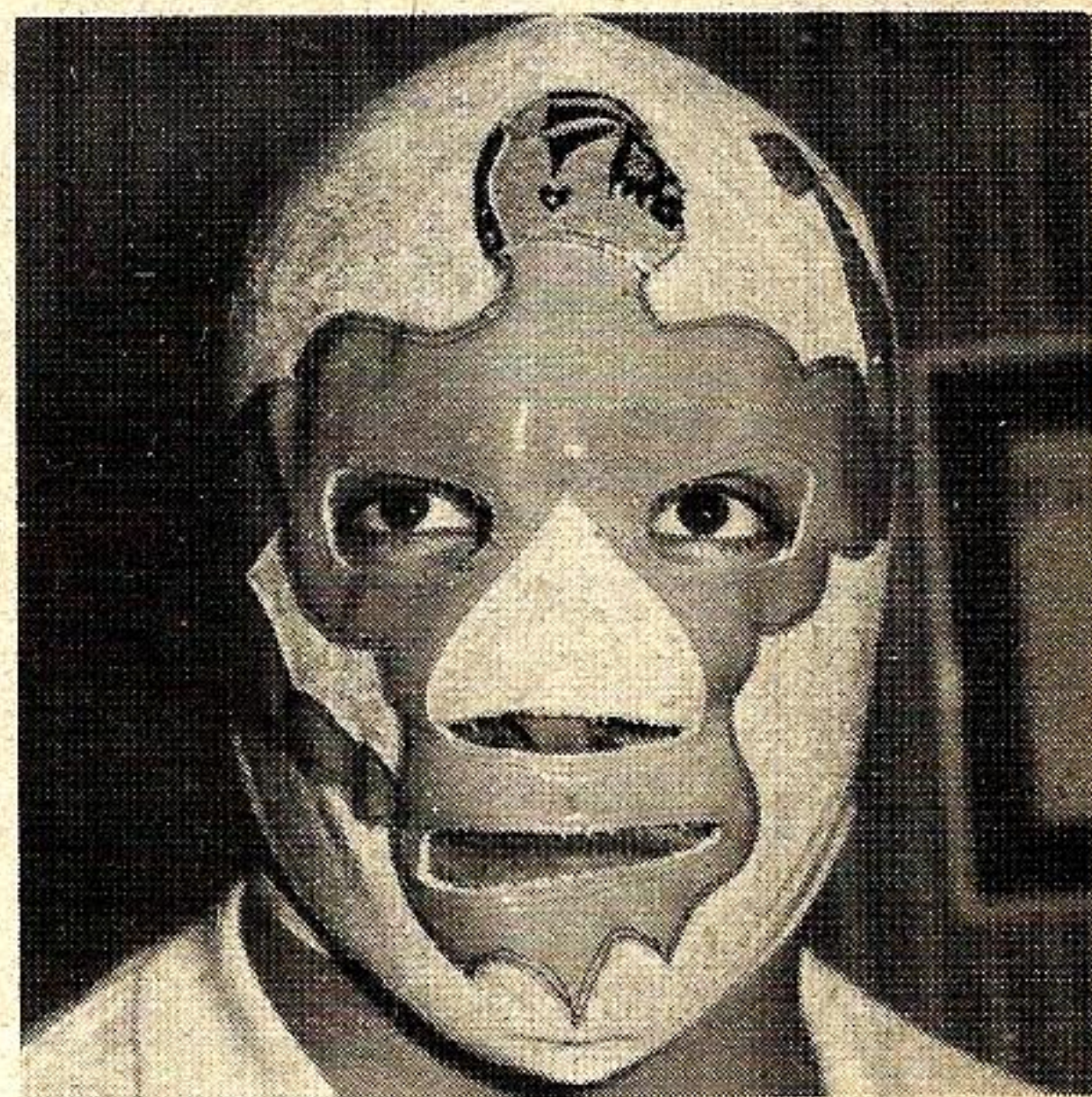
eliminated from becoming champion? As far as I am concerned, Nick Bockwinkel should not be the owner of the AWA belt now, Andre should. Let us hope something is done to correct this situation.

LENNY BRAUN
Indianapolis, Ind.

ONLY THIS MAGAZINE

Your magazine is to be commended for the fine investigatory work it did in the article, "Mil Mascaras Has Disappeared . . . And Only We Know Where He Is!" (January 1977).

Like many others, I had begun to wonder where Mil had gone. His name had suddenly disappeared from the headlines. No one seemed to know where he was wrestling. Leave it to your magazine to zero in and find



For Dusty Rhodes (left) 1976 proved to be a year he did not get what he set out for. Mil Mascaras (above)—fans all over the globe are hoping he will turn up in their area.

OR IS IT?

No matter what happens, I will stick by Dusty Rhodes. Therefore I find I must disagree with your story, "Dusty Rhodes: His Title Dream Is Now a Nightmare."

All right, so he didn't win the championship in 1976. That is not so terrible. He will win it. If that happens

World Title . . . But Only for Five Minutes!" (January 1977), proves my point. Because of one silly little rule, which has not been used in a long time, Andre was kept from his deserved reward. Is that fair? I hardly think so.

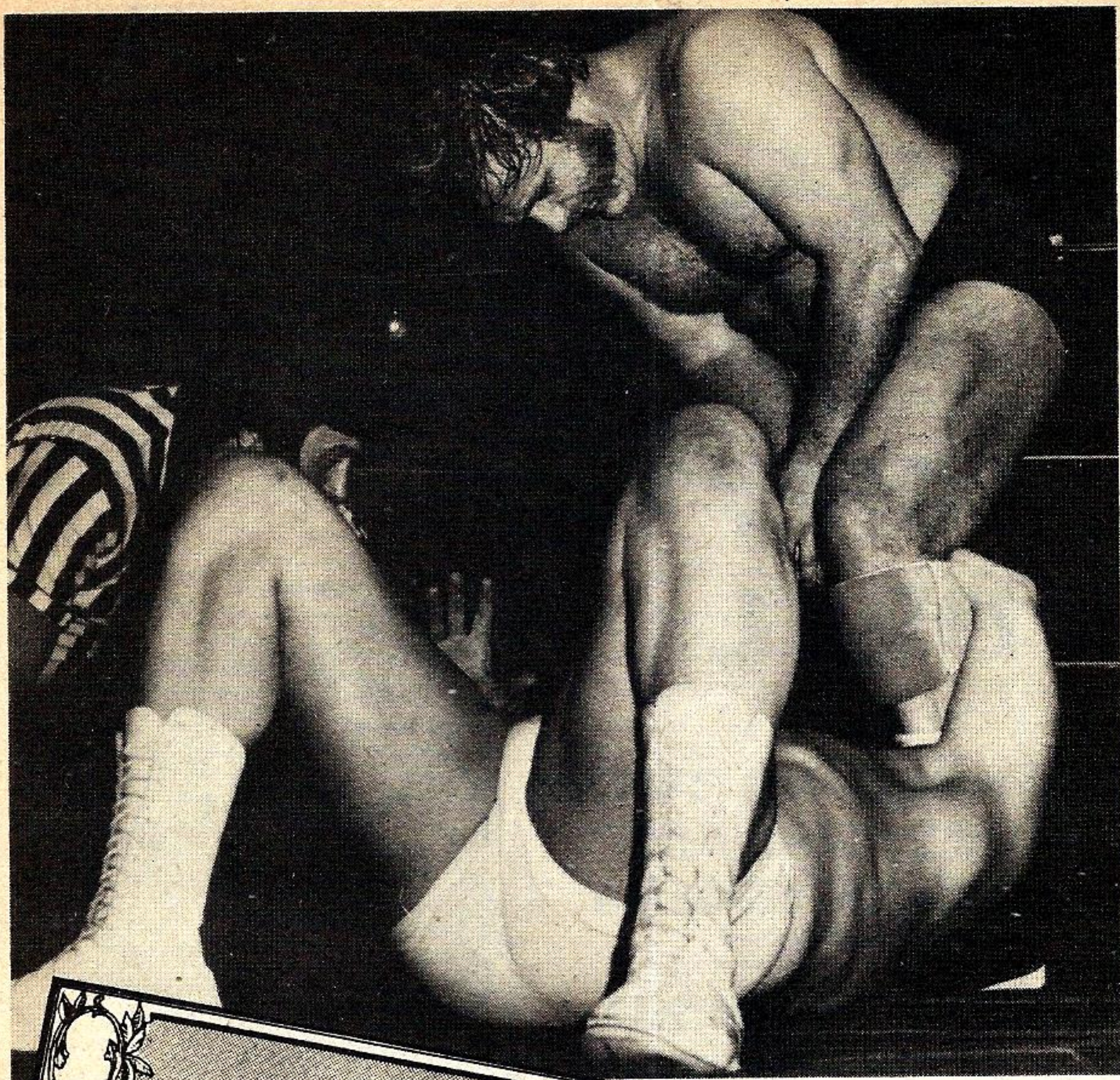
Just because the man has a single advantage over any other competitor in the sport, does that mean he must be

Mascaras.

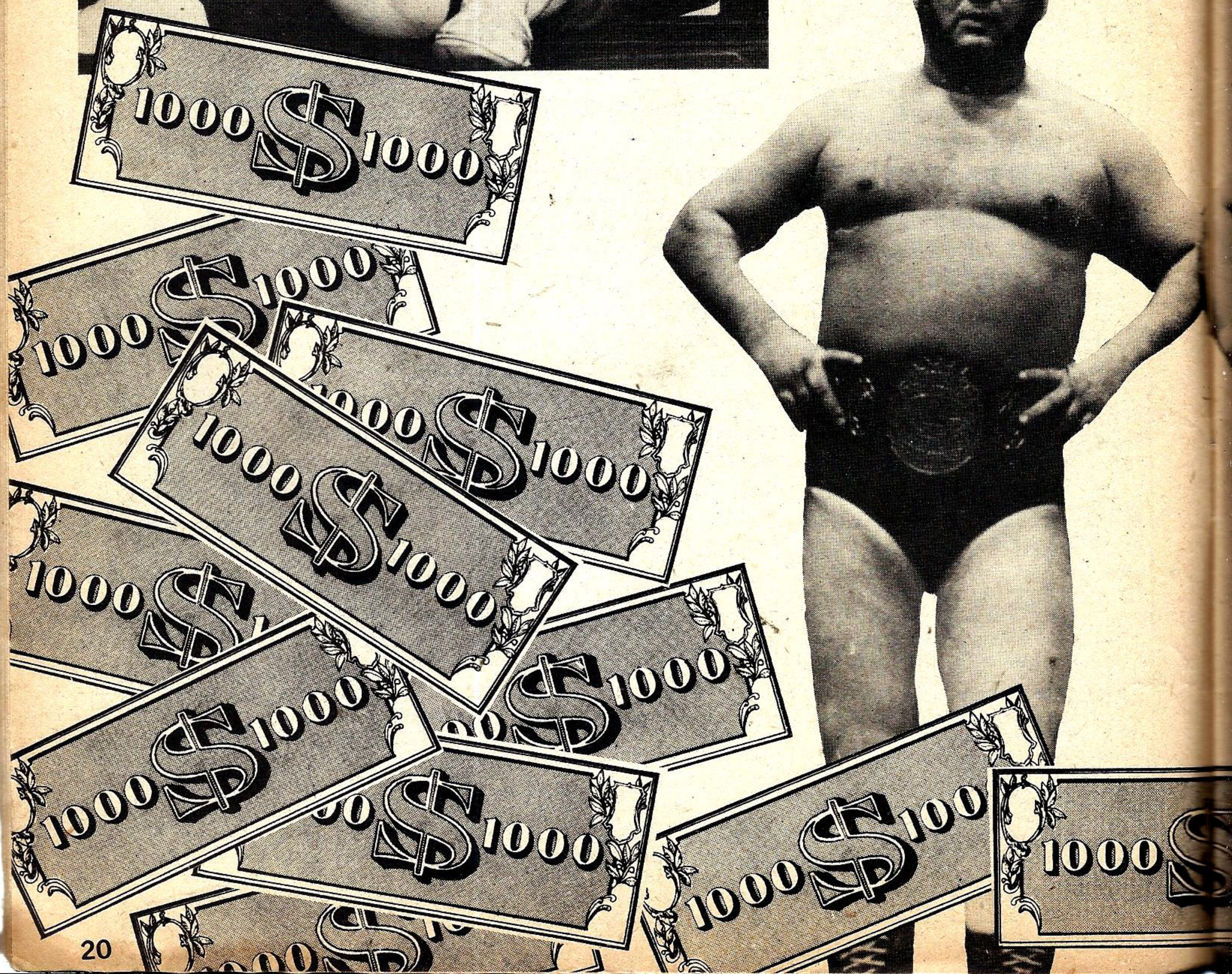
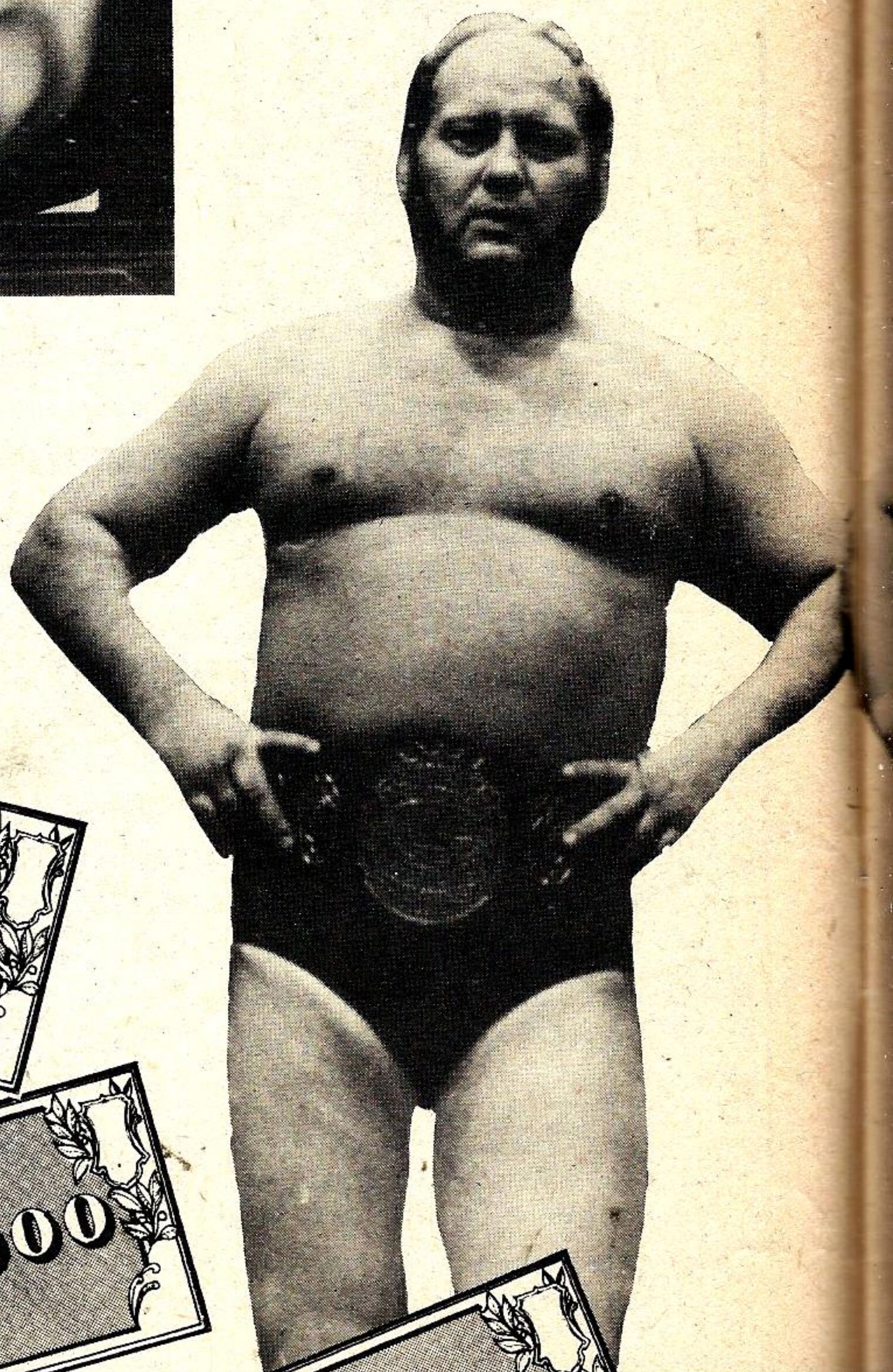
Now that he has been found, let us hope he will continue on his good ways in wrestling. The world needs men like Mil Mascaras. And wrestling fans need him too.

LUCIE DAVENPORT
Palo Alto, Calif.

(Continued on page 46)



THE AND
"\$100,000
TO AN
THAT BE



PERSONS: 000 Y TEAM ATS US!"

The Andersons promise \$100,000 to any tag team able to defeat them. It's an astonishing offer, giving foes added incentive to slaughter them. What makes a tag team do this? Is it a very expensive taunt, or the remarkable strategy of two wrestling geniuses?

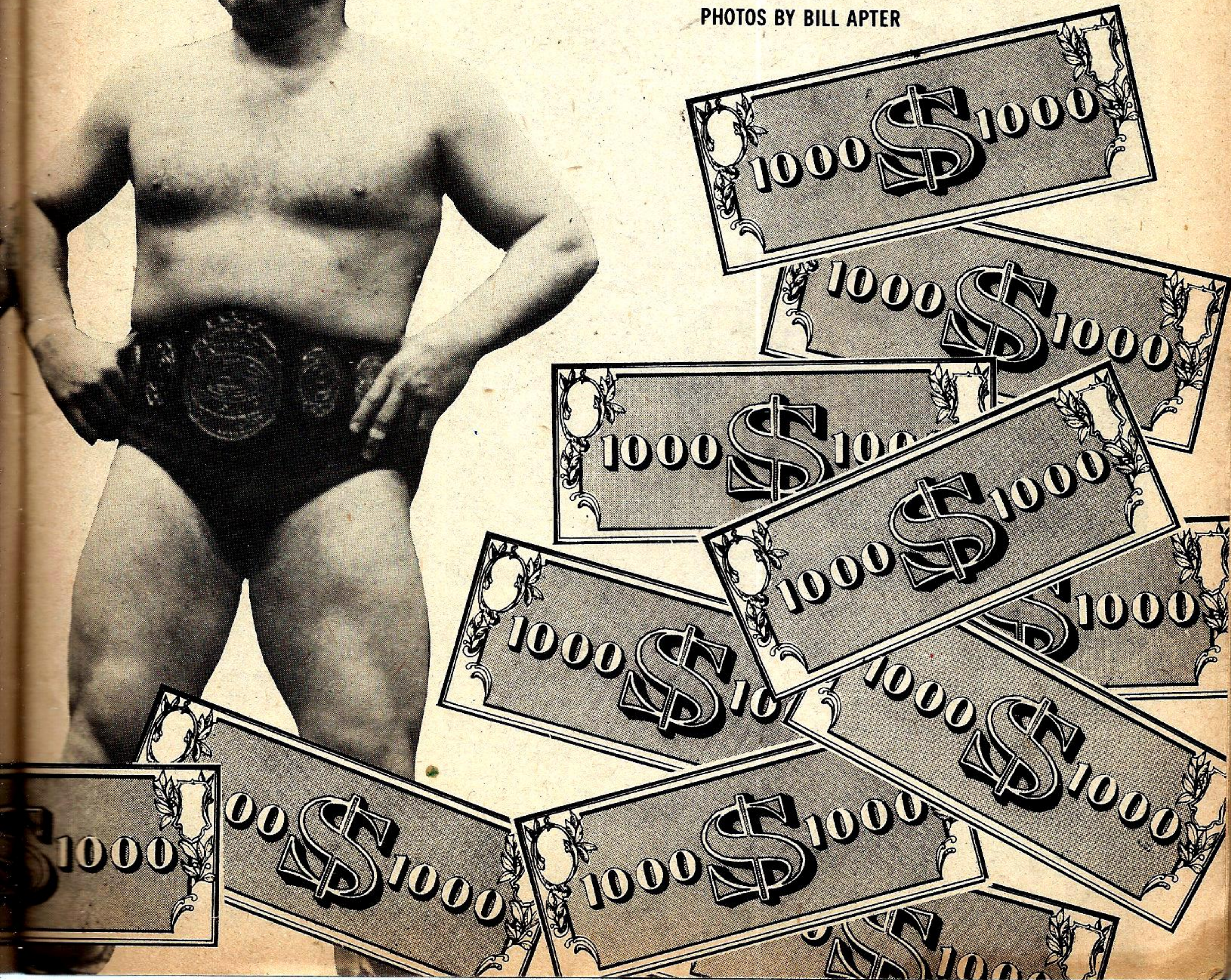
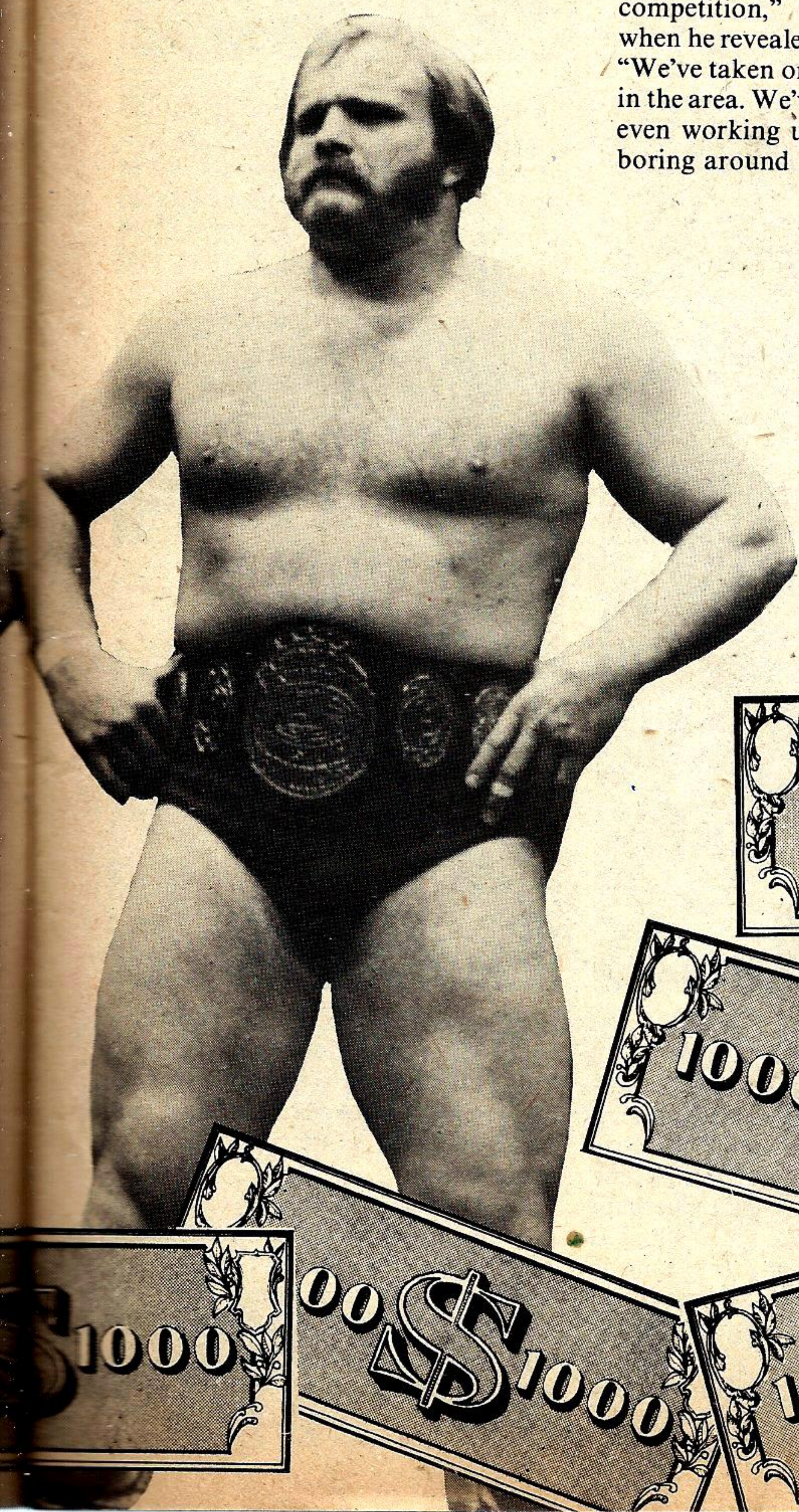
IT'S NOT A silly boast. They mean it. The Andersons have offered \$100,000 to any team that can beat them. That's \$50,000 per man for one evening's work.

"That should attract some real competition," Ole Anderson stated when he revealed the brothers' scheme. "We've taken on every decent tag team in the area. We've beaten them without even working up a sweat. It's getting boring around here.

"We've put the money in a bank account, ready to give it over to the first guys who can win a clean victory over us. That's 100,000 smackers. Believe me, it's a small price to pay for decent competition. As it stands now, it's the same losers over and over again. We may be bored into losing at this rate."

"Do you know what it's like," Gene Anderson added, "to walk into the arena *knowing* you're going to win,

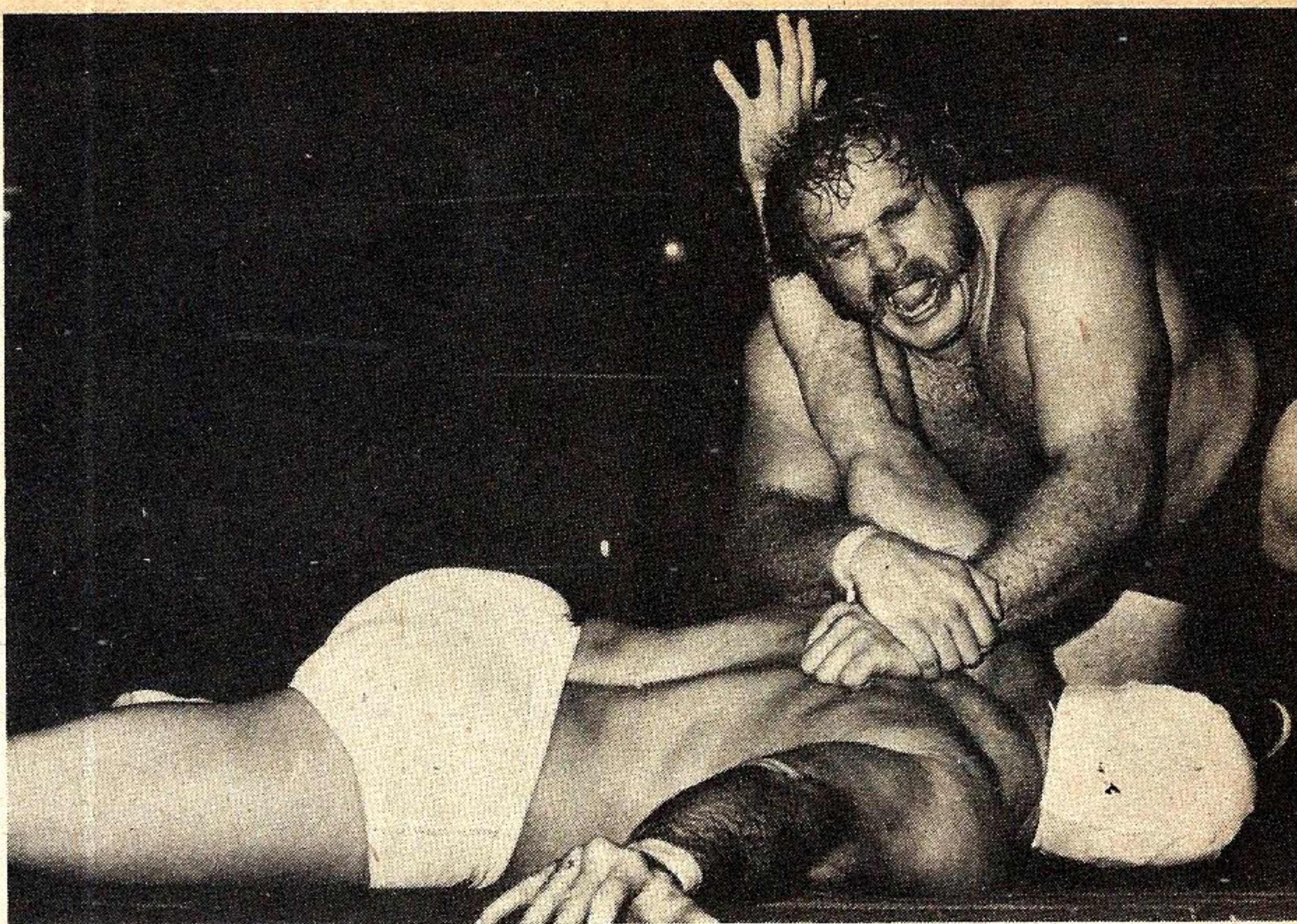
PHOTOS BY BILL APTER



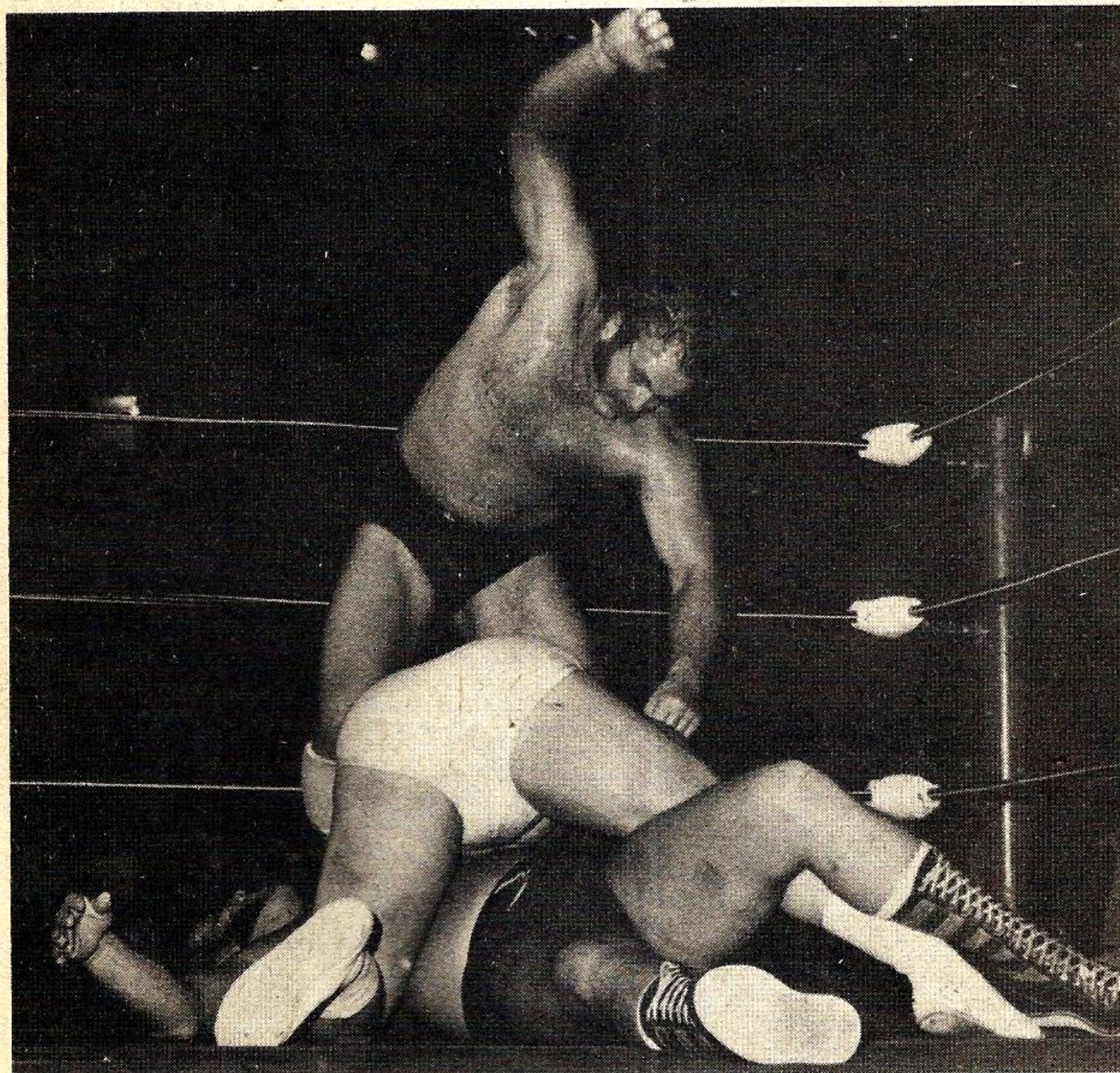
knowing you're a hundred times better than anyone they could possibly put you against. We don't even bother to train anymore. It's all the same, one patsy after another.

"At least, with \$100,000 at stake, we'll have a little interest in what happens. Of course, with the money we make from our many titles, we won't even notice the \$100,000. It's the same as nickel-in poker for most people."

However, when asked to see some record of the fortune actually being in a bank account, the Andersons refused to produce any evidence. They claimed their word was all the proof anyone should need. One would also have to accept their word as to being paid. The sum appears in none of their contracts. In fact, when Robert Fuller and Bob Armstrong asked that the money be written into the contract, Gene and Ole



Ole Anderson applies a punishing combination claw and armbreaker on popular Mr. Wrestling I (above). When they are in trouble, doubleteaming saves their money (left). Gene prepares to slug the masked man (below), knocking him senseless.



stormed out as if insulted. Of course, this made it impossible to get the \$100,000 guaranteed in writing.

"Our word is our bond!" Ole screamed the next day. "Have we ever lied to anybody? Can anyone say we've ever said anything less than honest?" Hurrying to prevent any names from being supplied, he continued, "How dare they besmirch our family name! I've a good mind not to wrestle them at all. To hell with them. I'm going to kill that pair when we get in the arena. They'll learn not to publicly doubt the

word of the Anderson brothers!"

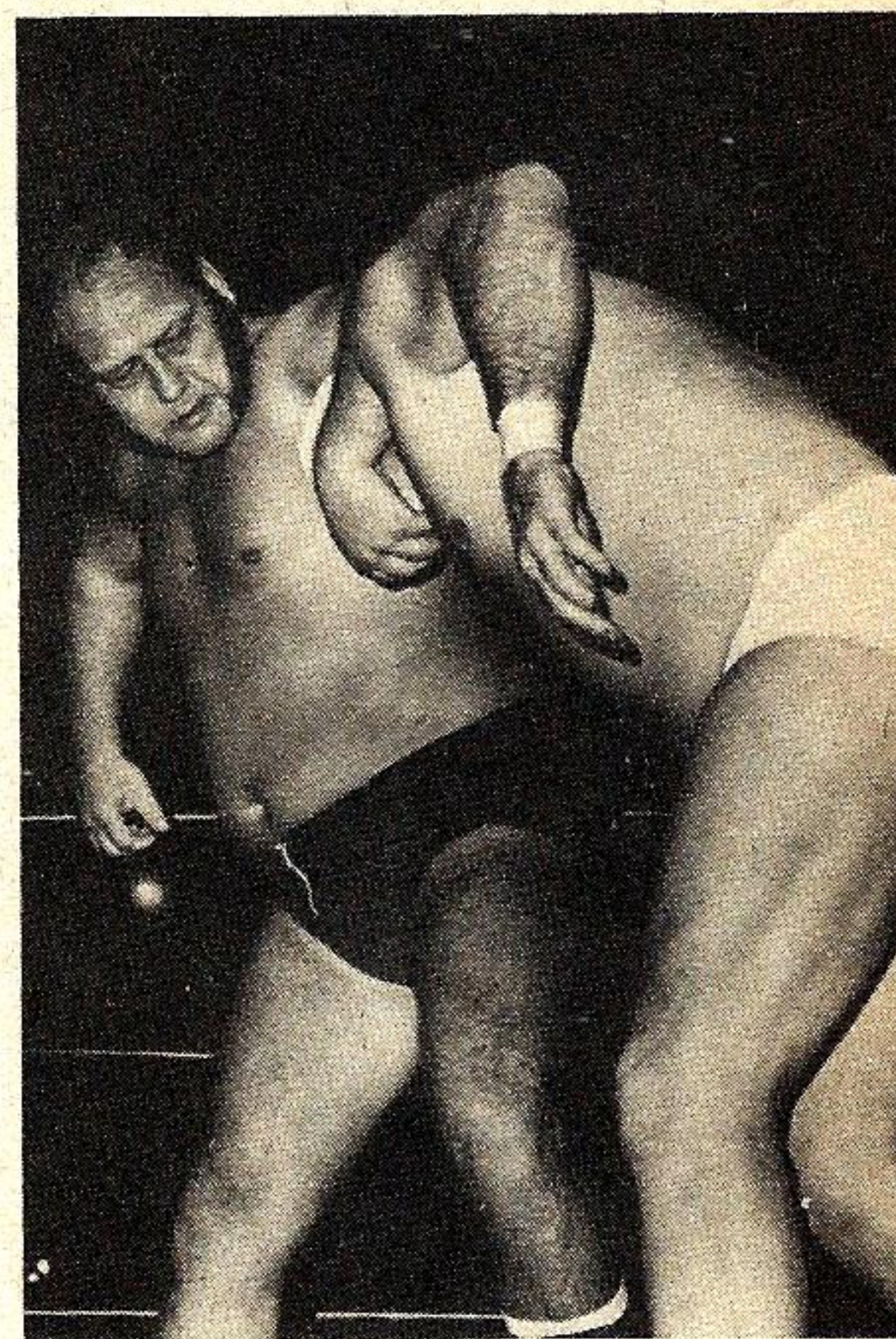
They didn't kill Fuller and Armstrong that evening, although they did manage to get the victory. Watching the pair in action, one can see how they gained their titles and fearsome reputation. They are perhaps the most cunning team in wrestling. It doesn't take an observer too long to discover their strategy. Preventing their strategy is a much more difficult problem.

The Andersons concentrate on one of their two opponents. Once they feel

sure of how to handle the man, they sucker him into destroying himself. You'll often see one opponent appear to be beating both Andersons. He's not being glorious, as he supposes, he is being taken.

When the Andersons sense their prey has tired, they snap into action. They reveal they haven't been hurt, just waiting. At this point, when the attacker realizes he's the attacked, it's also obvious help is impossible. The victim finds himself in the Andersons'

(Continued on page 50)



"U NCLE TOM!!"

That ugly insult has been hurled at many black men over the past 100 years. It implies a black man has surrendered his dignity in order to please or humor white men. It is an insult with an impact which can sting for a long, long time.

Ask Thunderbolt Patterson. He knows.

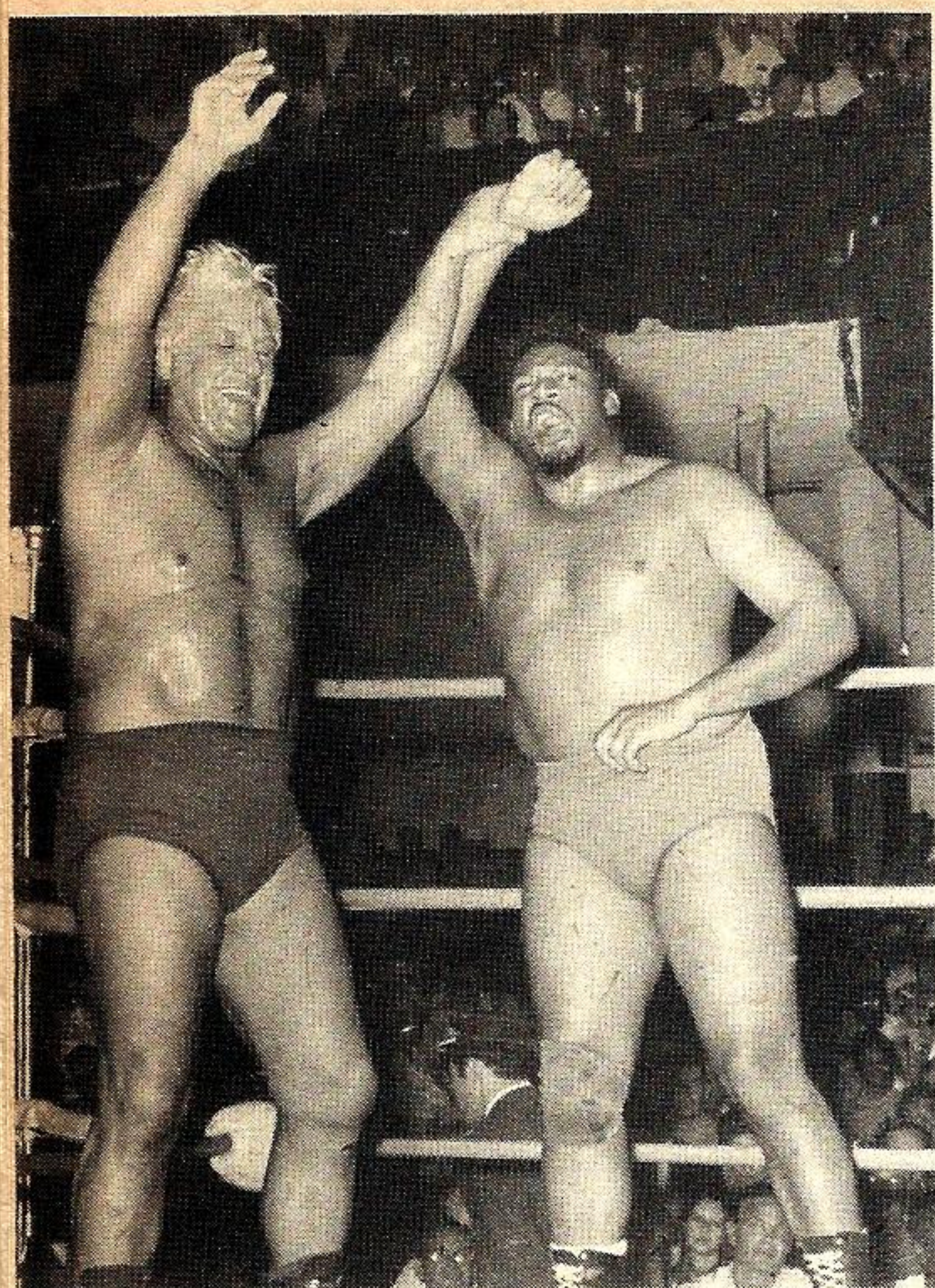
Being called an "Uncle Tom" can
(Continued)



Thunderbolt couldn't tell you when his humiliation began; it was overwhelming almost before he realized. This is more than a story of a wrestler saving his career. It's the story of a man saving his life

PHOTOS BY JIM CALDWELL

"UNCLE TOM!" THE SHAME T-BOLT PATTERSON HAS FINALLY OVERCOME



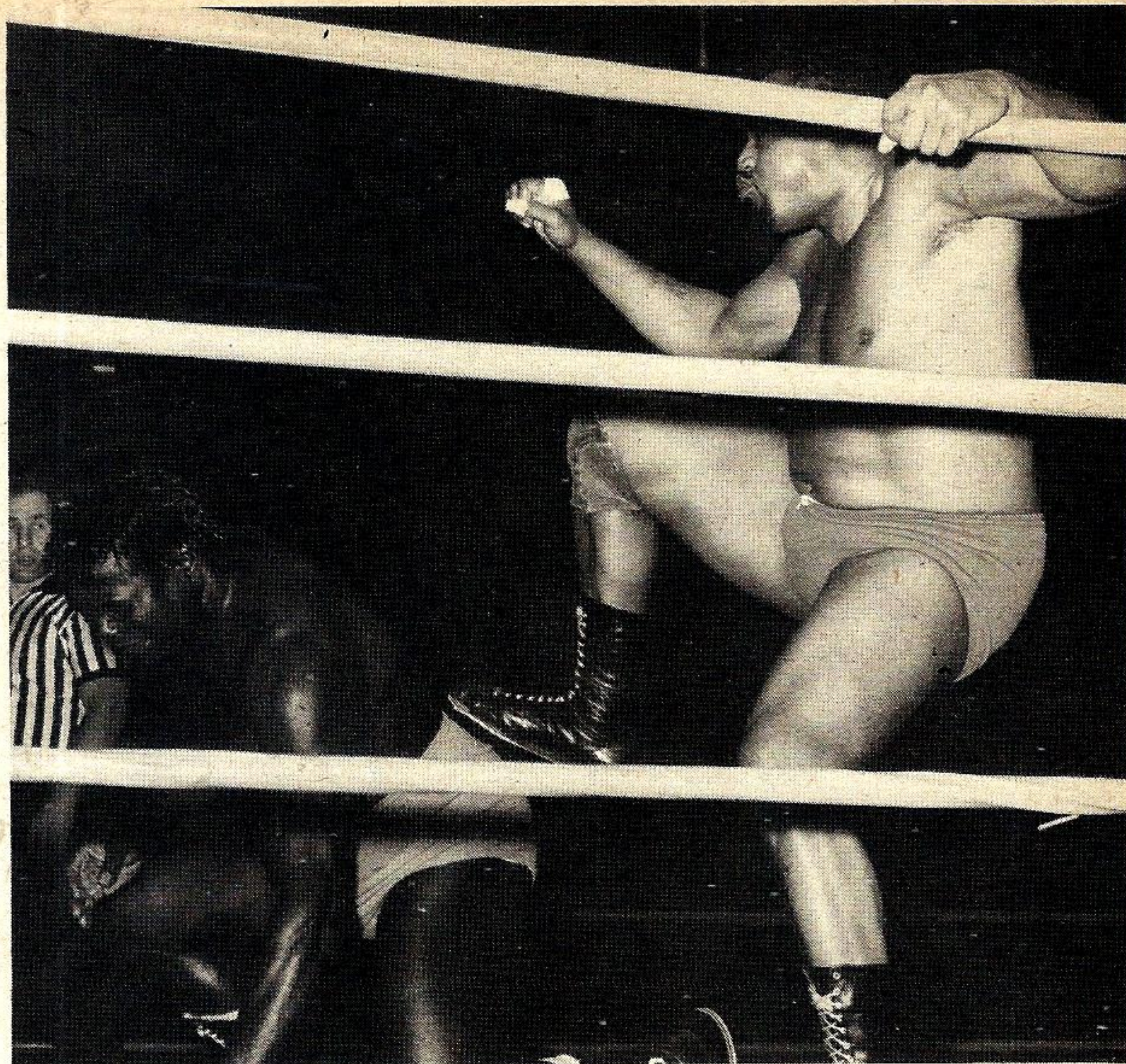
be disastrous to a man. It can destroy his sense of honor. It can demolish his self image. And in many cases, the cause for the insult was not intended to be an act of self-degradation.

There was a time when Thunderbolt Patterson had been subjected to cries of "Uncle Tom" everywhere he went. He had not intended this to happen, but it was one of the consequences of a very poor decision on his part. And when you make a bad choice, you must accept the results which follow.

T-Bolt had decided to become a rulebreaker. It was a bad idea from beginning to crashing end. But it had been Patterson's decision. The cries of "Uncle Tom" were inevitable.

It seems as soon as T-Bolt had opted for illegal tactics in order to win bouts, some promoters thought it might be a good idea to match him against other black men. This way, they thought, these men would be somehow eliminated from competition, having been vanquished by Patterson's ruthless tactics. This would allow the rise of white wrestlers to the forefront.

Most people now believe this had not been Patterson's intention; that he had become an unwitting tool of a handful of promoters (who were subsequently drummed out of the sport for their prejudiced attitudes). He certainly did not expect what followed.



Soon after T-Bolt's change in tactics became evident, the insults started flying. Everywhere he went, people would yell out "Uncle Tom!" at him. These insults hurt Patterson. He wanted to stop them. But he also wanted to win matches.

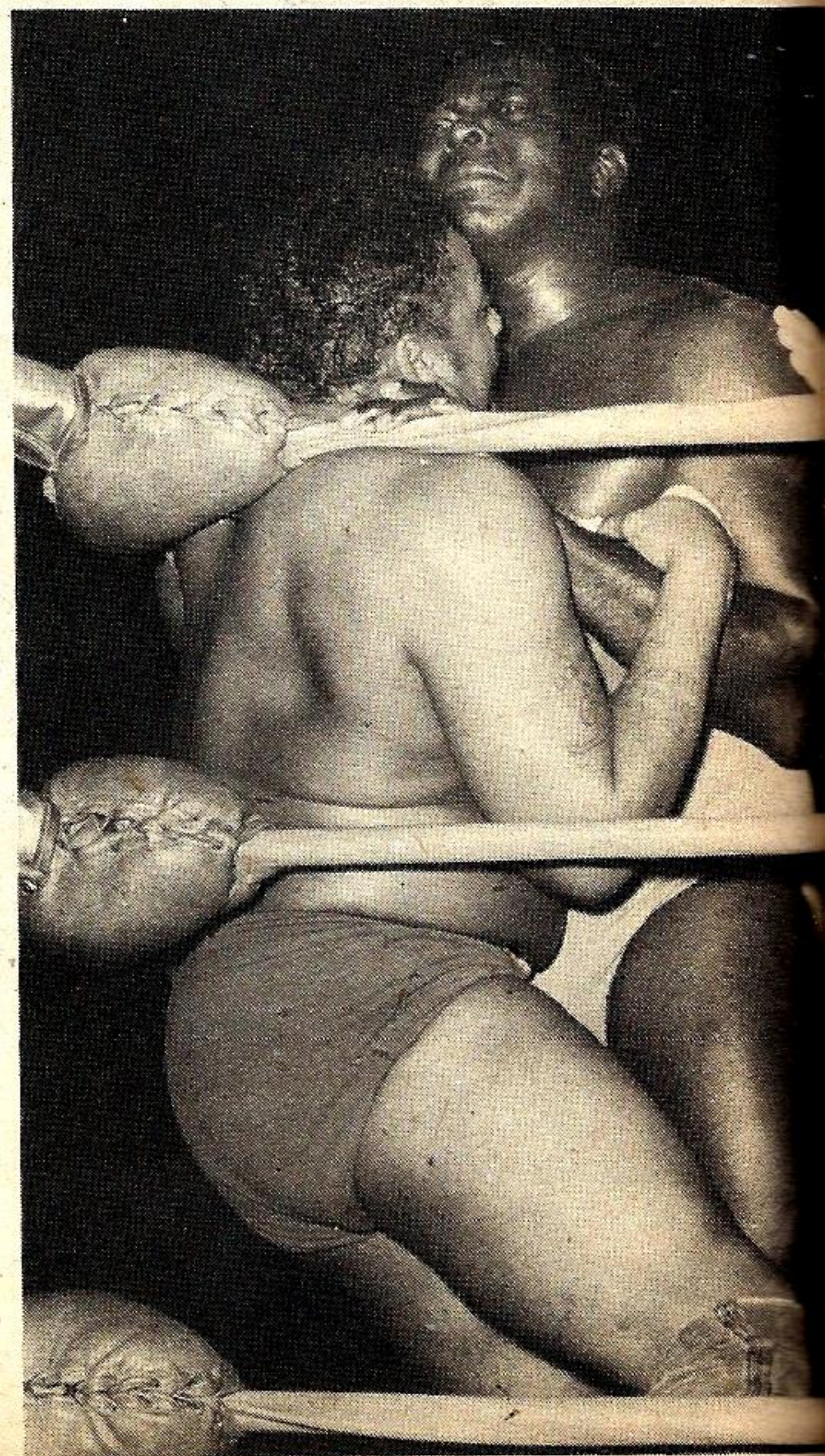
The insults reached a peak the night Patterson wrestled Bobo Brazil. The moment T-Bolt entered the arena spectators started screaming the insult at him. Patterson could not avoid looking at these people who had once cheered for him. He could see the hate in their eyes. He finally realized how foolish he had been.

As he was wrestling Bobo, T-Bolt kept thinking to himself, "I shouldn't be doing this. It isn't right." And after that match, he vowed to never allow himself to be placed in such a circumstance again. He shed the illegal maneuvers he had been using. He swore to wrestle only scientifically from that time on.

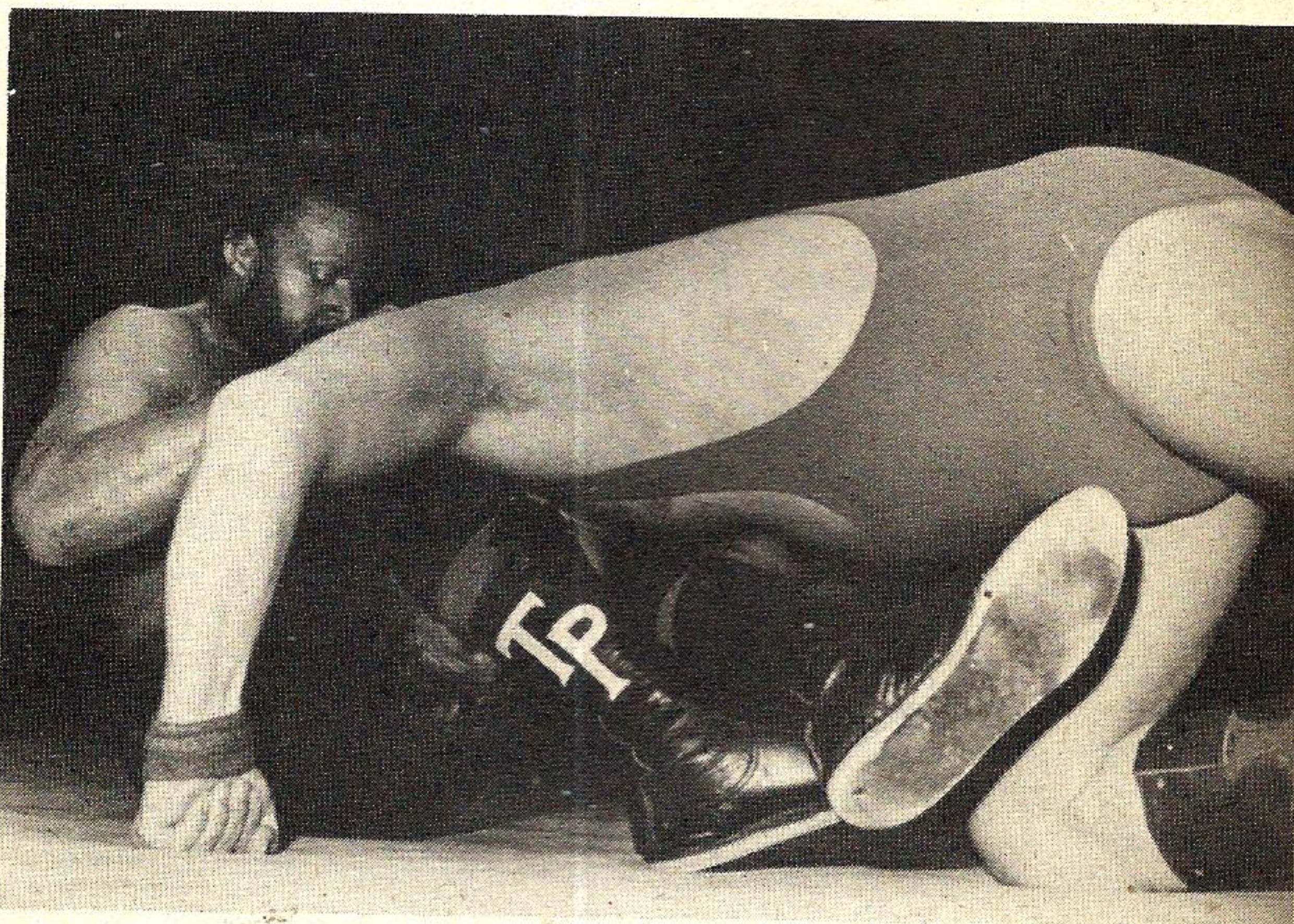
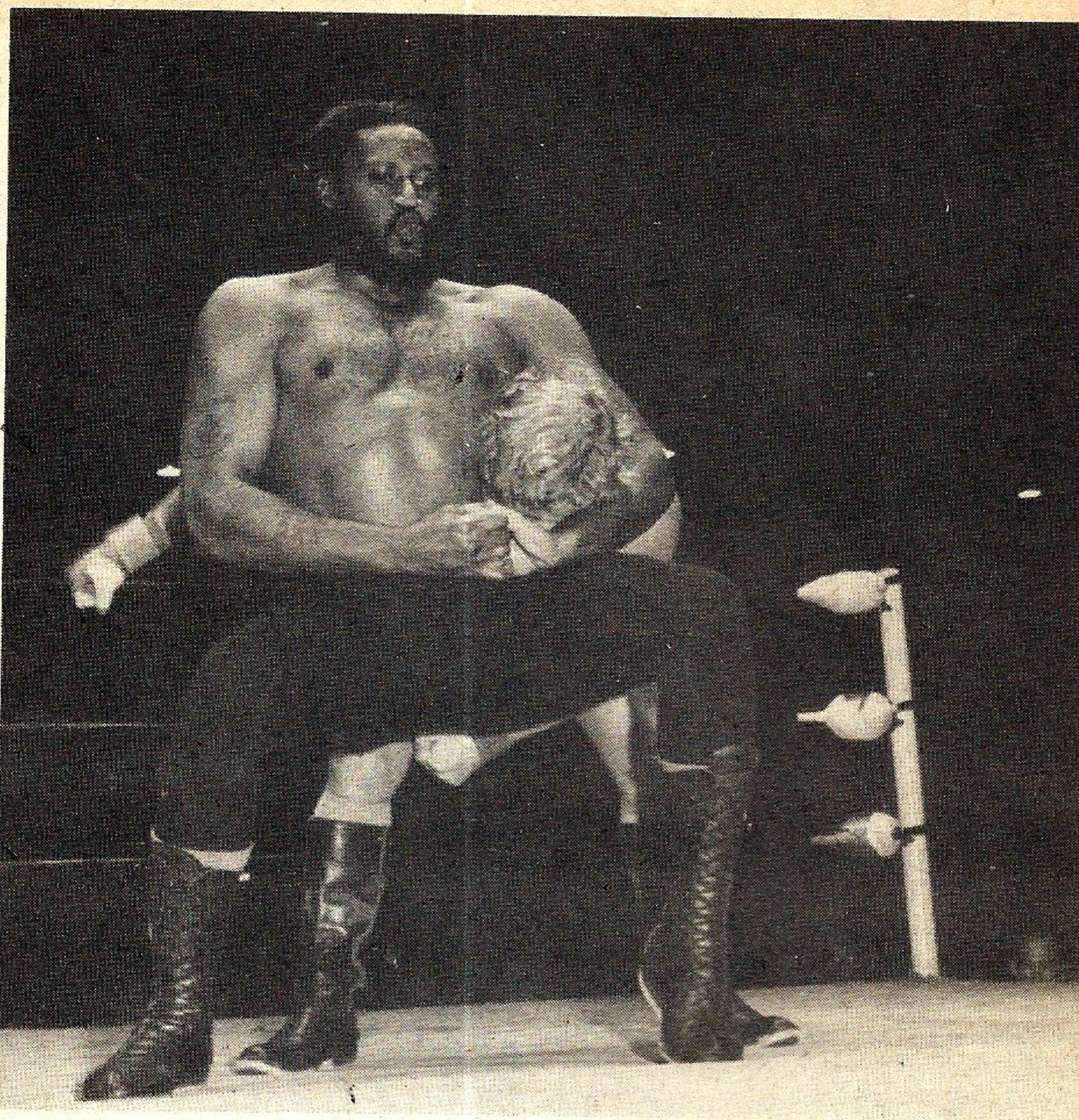
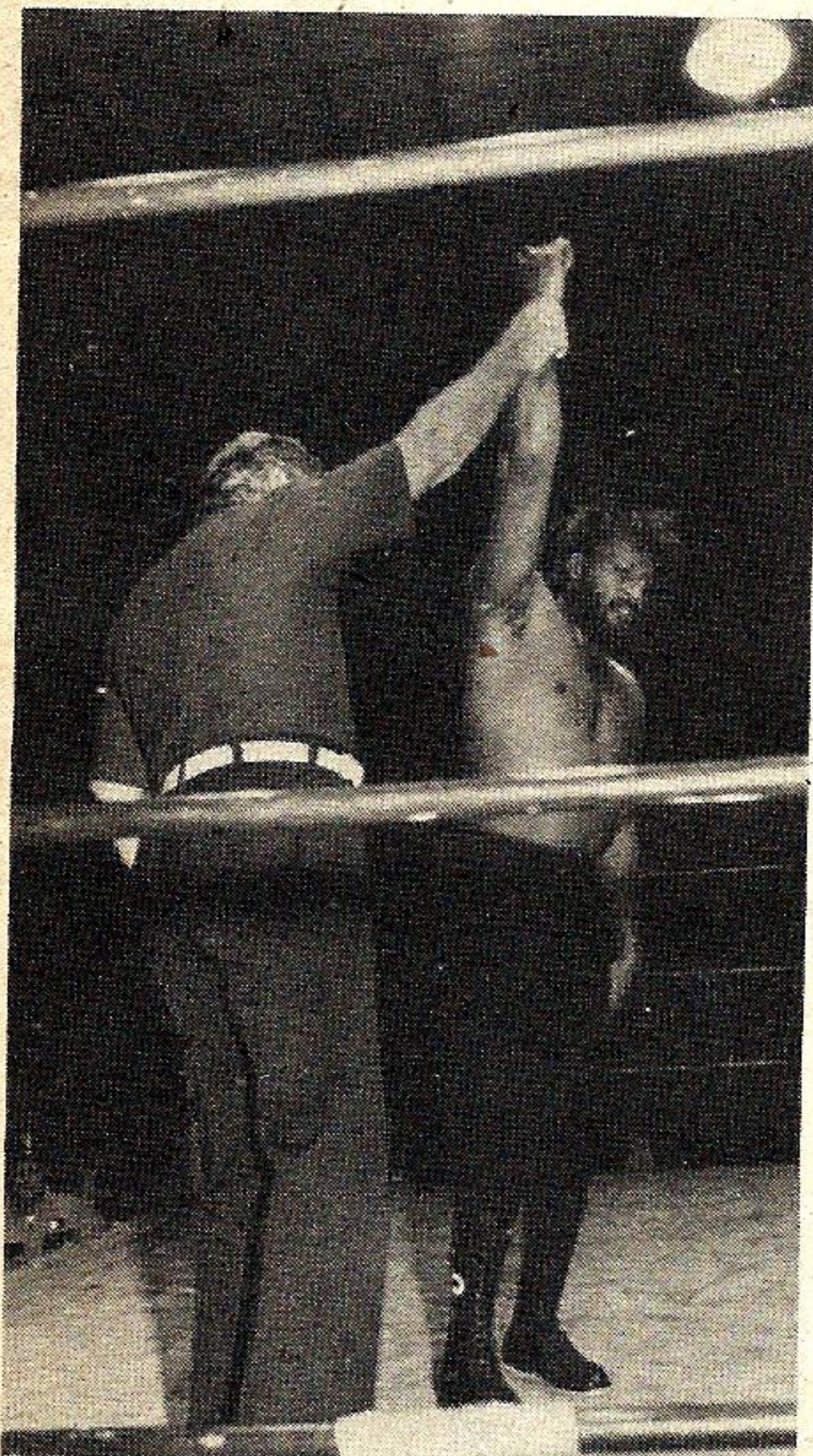
It took a long time for the insults to stop. Even though he had reformed, people were not that quick to forgive and forget the misery Patterson had caused. In their eyes, T-Bolt was still an "Uncle Tom," and they were not about to let him forget it.

But time does heal all wounds. Eventually people forgot that time

His short-lived partnership with the hated Fred Blassie (far left) saw him ridiculed by fans regularly. In matches against Bobo Brazil (above and right), it was Bobo who was the crowd pleaser.



The "Uncle Tom" days are all over for T-Bolt now. His hand is raised proudly in victory (below) as he is cheered by fans. Lord Al Hays is sorry he ever called T-Bolt "Uncle Tom." Patterson really gave him a whipping (right and below).



period, or they simply forgave Patterson for a lapse in judgement. Every once in a while, someone would still call him an Uncle Tom, but this became less and less frequent. Finally it stopped.

And then along came Lord Al Hays.

Hays, knowing he would be matched against Patterson, decided to do some research into the subject of his opponent. As had to happen, Hays found out about that time T-Bolt would rather forget about. He also found out how ashamed Patterson was to be called an Uncle Tom. Hays realized he had a vital psychological weapon to use on his opponent.

And so the night of the match, Hays tested his opponent. As T-Bolt was entering the ring, Hays called out, "Uncle Tom, do you think you have it in you to win tonight? What do you say, *Uncle Tom*?"

For a moment, Patterson went through a wide range of emotions.

At first he was ashamed. Then he was angry. Finally he regained his calm. He said nothing. He refused to acknowledge the slur. The fans took note of this. They cheered him on to victory.

Afterwards, T-Bolt allowed himself a little anger at Hays: "There was no reason for him to call me that. I am not an 'Uncle Tom.' Just what was he trying to prove by calling me that? Well, I

certainly showed him. He can call me anything he wants. It doesn't bother me. It doesn't bother my fans I have come a long way from being an 'Uncle Tom'."

Indeed, Thunderbolt Patterson has come a long way from that bad time during his career. He has overcome the shame and lived out the sorrow. He need not ever worry about being called "Uncle Tom" again! □

THE JOE LEDUC ST NEVER THOUGHT Y

A STUNNED SILENCE followed the confession. For the first time during the interview, Joe LeDuc smiled. It felt good to reveal the terrors which had been torturing this great athlete.

"Kind of funny, isn't it?" LeDuc continued in a voice slightly above a whisper. "Everyone thinks of me as a tough, brave guy who would just as soon as break a guy's head as look at him. Everyone is wrong. I've never walked into an arena without being scared out of my skull. Every match is an ordeal. I have to steel my nerves not to run back to the dressing room."

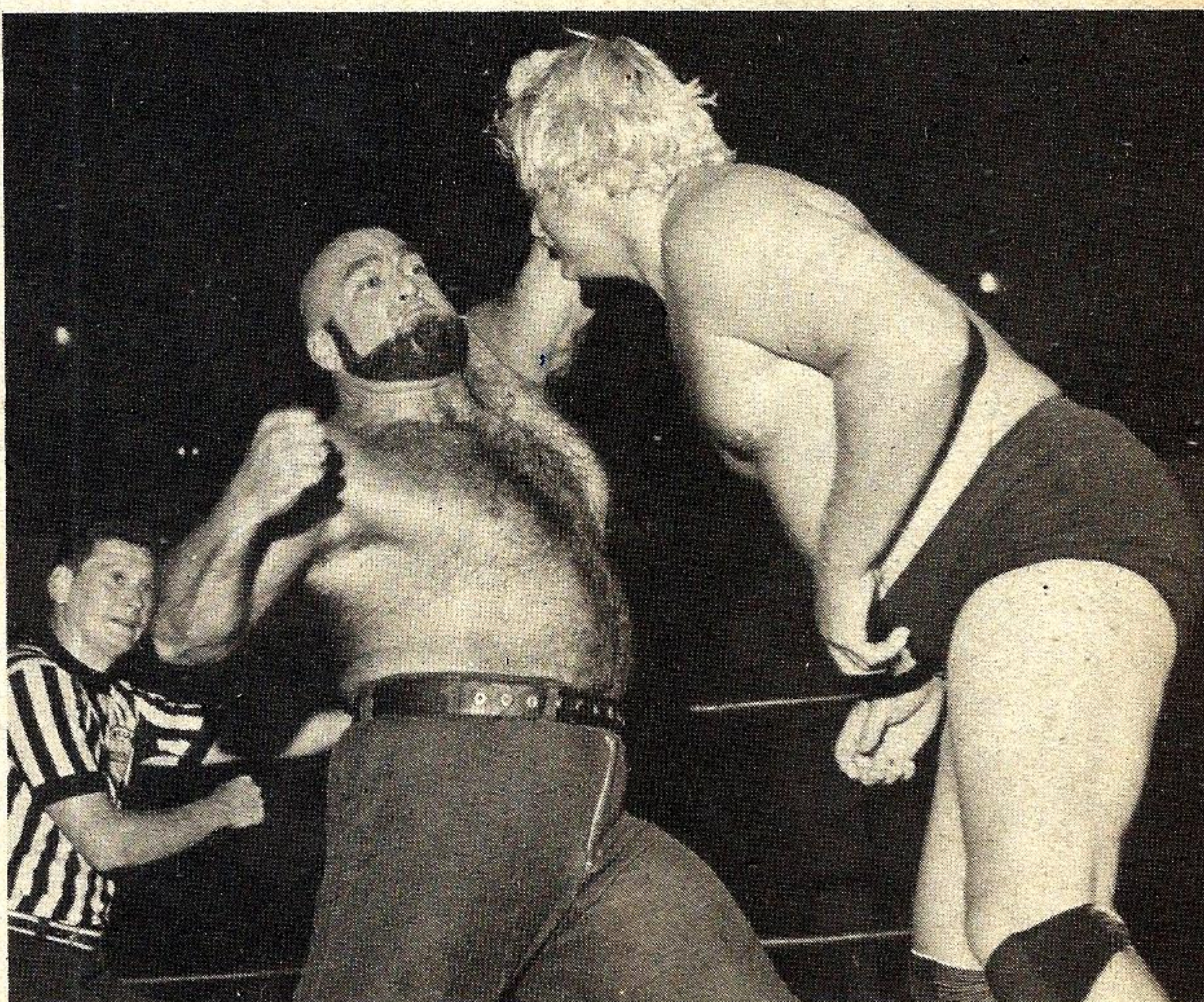
LeDuc claims there's a difference between the nerves everyone suffers and the bloodcurdling fear which lodges in the pit of his stomach.

"It overwhelms me," LeDuc swears, "the excitement, the people, and the man who wants to batter me. Mostly the guy who's my opponent. The thought of feeling pain terrifies me. I don't attack out of anger or desire. My only motivation is fear."

Anyone familiar with LeDuc's career must find this incredible. Match after match, he has brawled against the most vicious men the sport has ever known. He has bloodied and been bloodied. No one has ever doubted his courage against the most remarkable odds. Recently, he has added to his reputation by challenging top grapplers to handicap matches, pitting himself against two opponents. LeDuc takes more risks than most wrestlers even dream of taking.

"My whole life," Joe proclaims, "is a test to overcome my fear. I purposely put myself in situations where I must be courageous. When every nerve in my body screams to flee, that's when I force myself to stay. My entire life is a war against fear. There's no excuse for a man to feel like I do, so I have to conquer that fear."

What LeDuc has run from all his life



Although he looks confident as he prepares to smash Bobby Duncum in the jaw, big Joe LeDuc admits he is terrified whenever he enters the ring. Joe admitted this is an exclusive interview with this magazine.

may only be the natural anxiety any man experiences before going into combat. The "fear" he believes makes him cower has certainly not crippled him; his exploits are legendary among wrestling observers. If a man wants a tag team partner dependable to the last, he chooses LeDuc. This "fear" could easily be LeDuc's anger at his not being perfect.

When asked who LeDuc considered brave, the grappler replied "Every guy I meet in the ring is brave. They may be a little nervous, but they don't want to run. I tell you, I want to get the hell out of there as soon as possible. I'm a cornered rat every moment of my life. The other guys are different. I know they are."

In fact, all wrestlers describe some of the anxiety LeDuc claims to experience. However, LeDuc, unable to accept this in himself, has magnified it all out of proportion. He's subconsciously punishing himself for not being the man no one could possibly be.

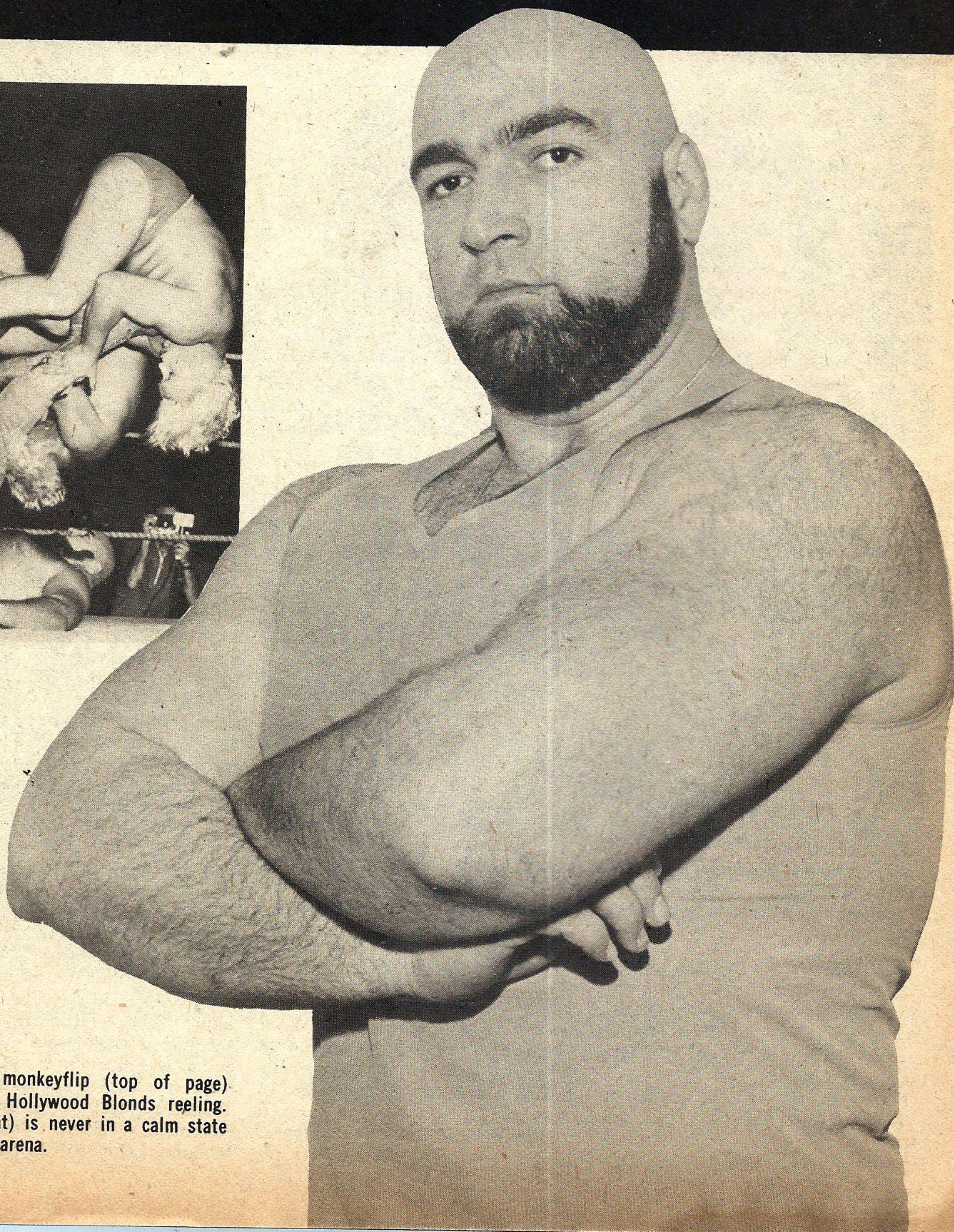
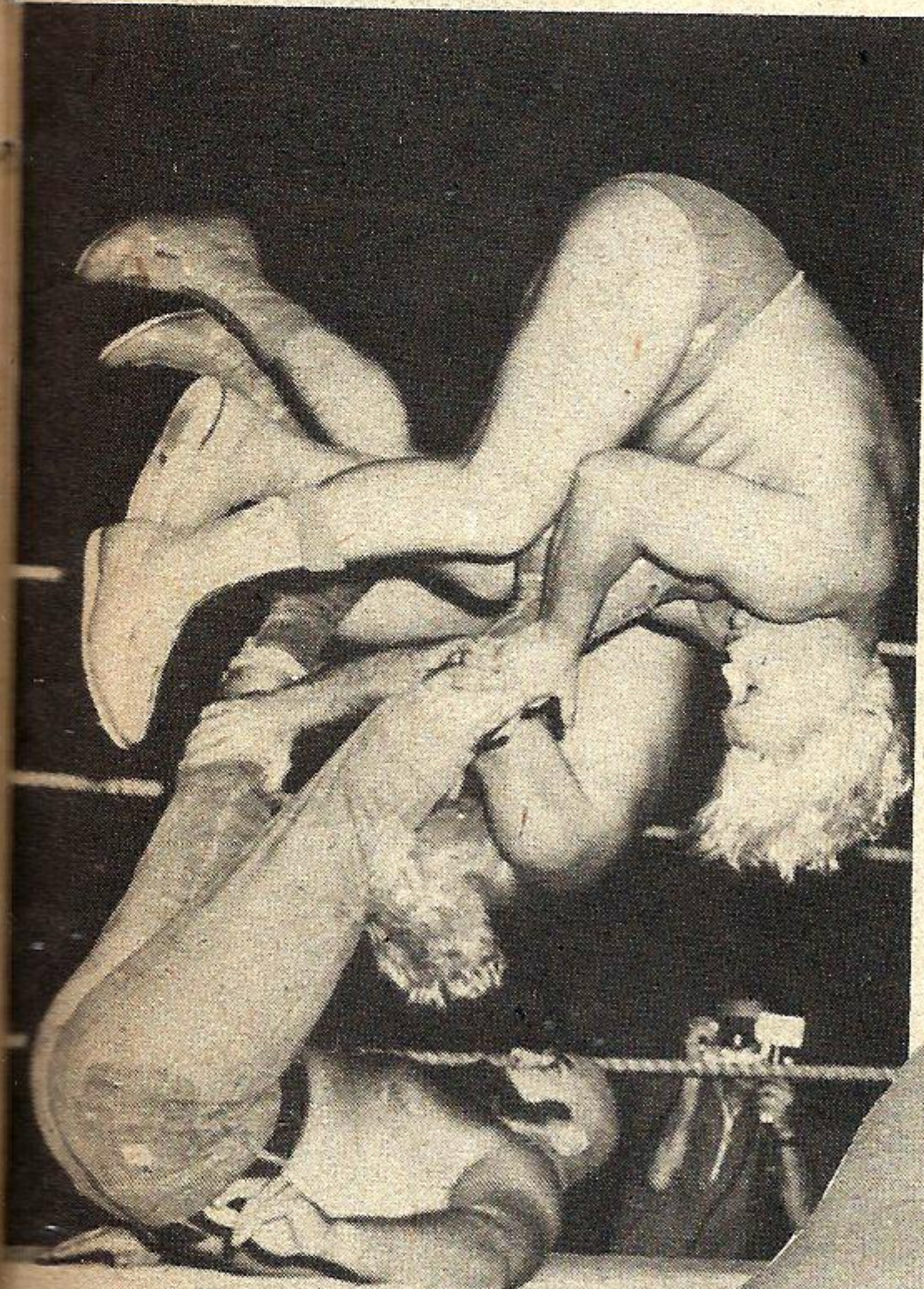
Why did he decide to reveal this to his public?

"I'm tired of living a lie. I want the world to know what I really am."

The only lie Joe LeDuc need worry about is the one he keeps telling himself. LeDuc is a brave man who hates himself because he is a human being and not a god. Now the world knows his secret. Joe LeDuc is a man to be respected. □

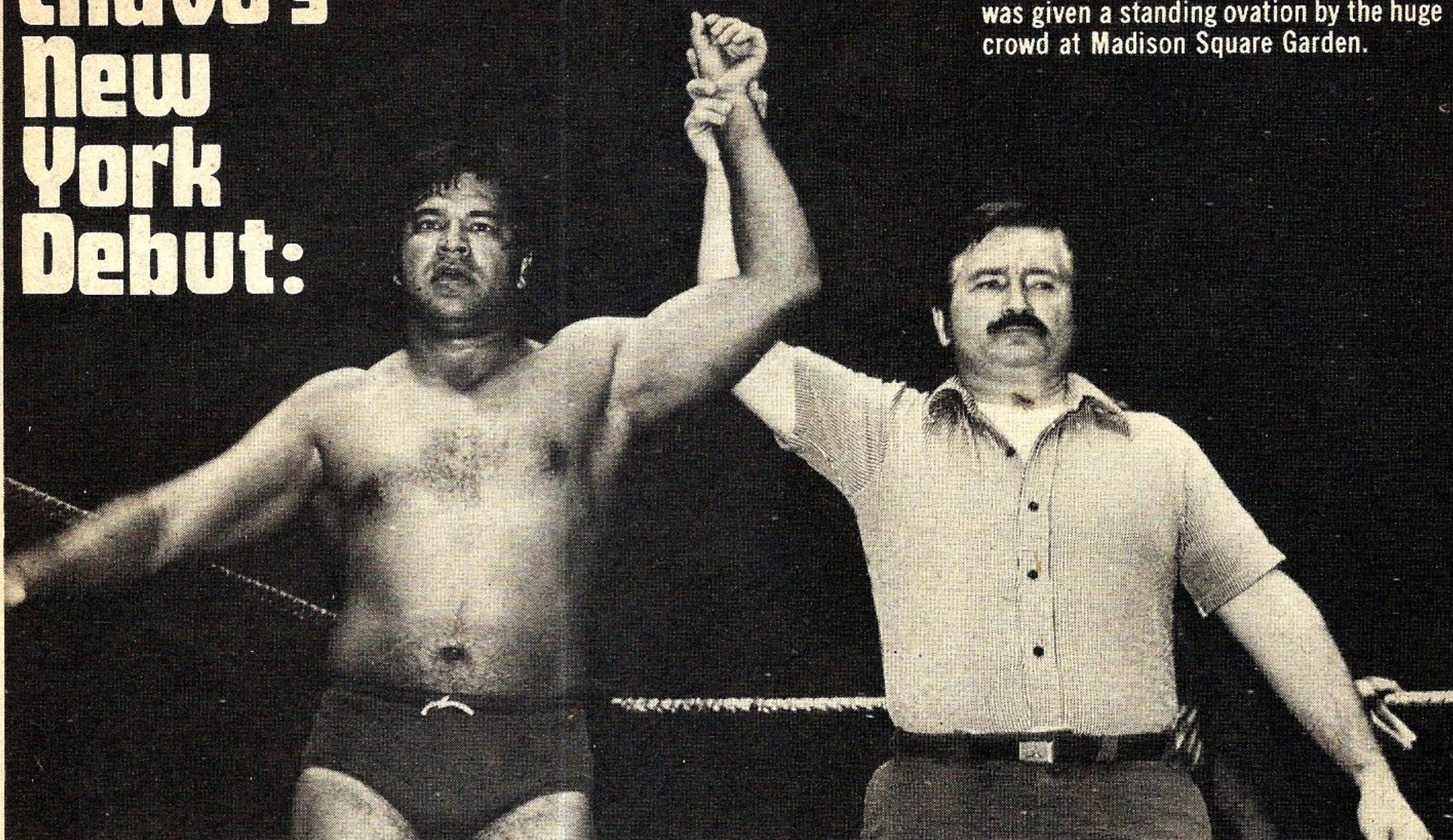
DRY YOU OU'D SEE

A man can destroy himself for many reasons. Joe LeDuc may be destroying himself for the crime of not being perfect. The grappler claims to be afraid of the world when in fact it may be he's afraid of himself



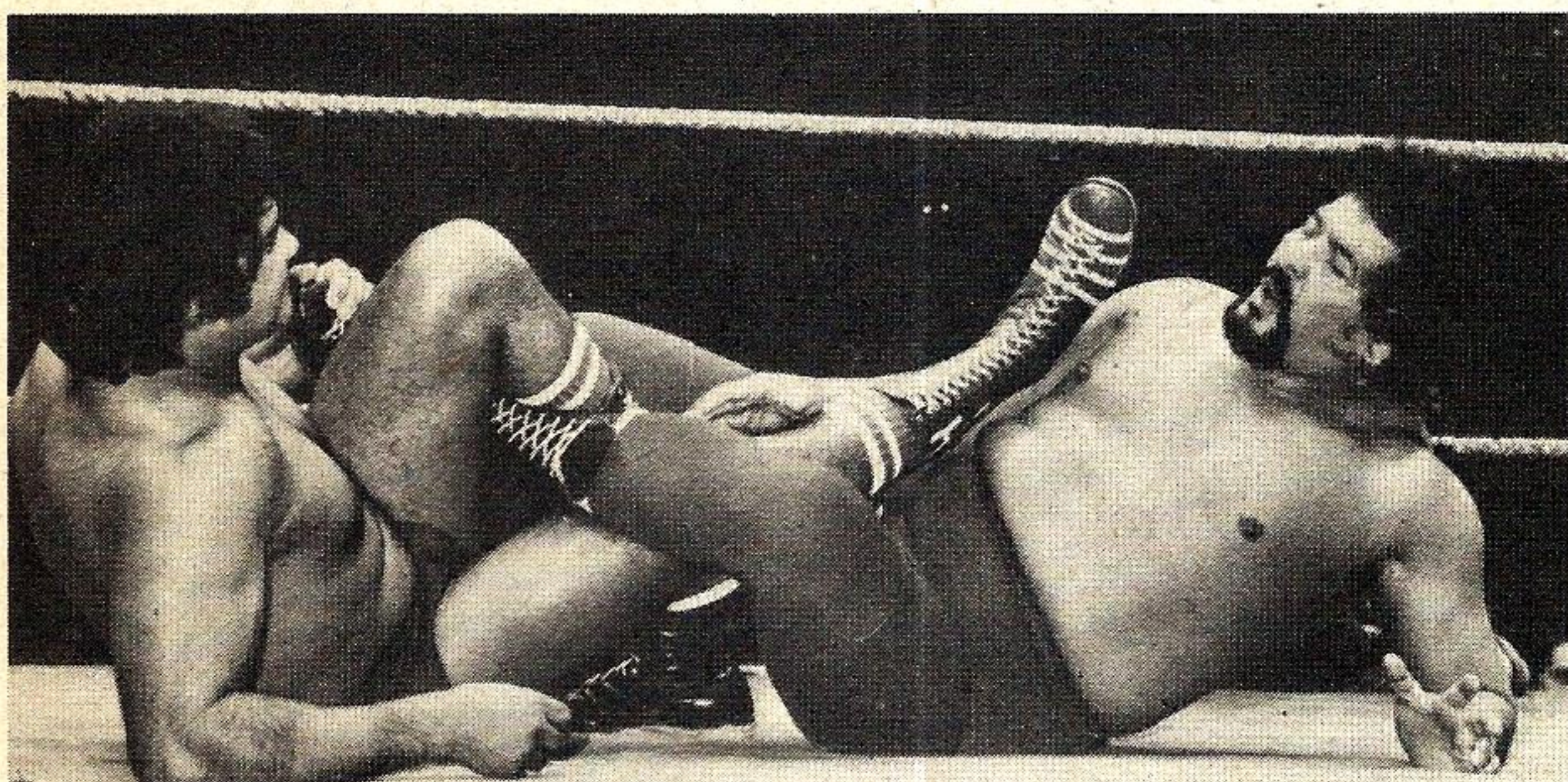
A double monkeyflip (top of page) sends The Hollywood Blonds reeling. LeDuc (right) is never in a calm state when in an arena.

Chavo's New York Debut:



WWF referee Al Vass raises Chavo's arm after he defeats Rocky Tamayo. Chavo was given a standing ovation by the huge crowd at Madison Square Garden.

WHAT PRICE VICTORY?



Young Guerrero locks Tamayo in a modified figure four leglock. Chavo dazzled Tamayo with his large repertoire of holds. Fans in the east can expect to see more of Chavo in the future. But are his financial backers pushing Chavo too far too soon? Only time will tell.

THOUGH A YOUNG MAN, Chavo Guerrero's eyes burn with a veteran's intensity. He never relaxes. At times, his hand trembles uncontrollably. In the last year, he's aged a decade.

Many people find the tension of New York City unbearable. Yet many New Yorkers found themselves uncomfortable in Chavo's presence—

he made them nervous. Sitting is an ordeal for this young man. All remember his trip to New York as a marathon of pacing. New York promoters joked they got stiff necks trying to look at the continually moving young man as they talked to him.

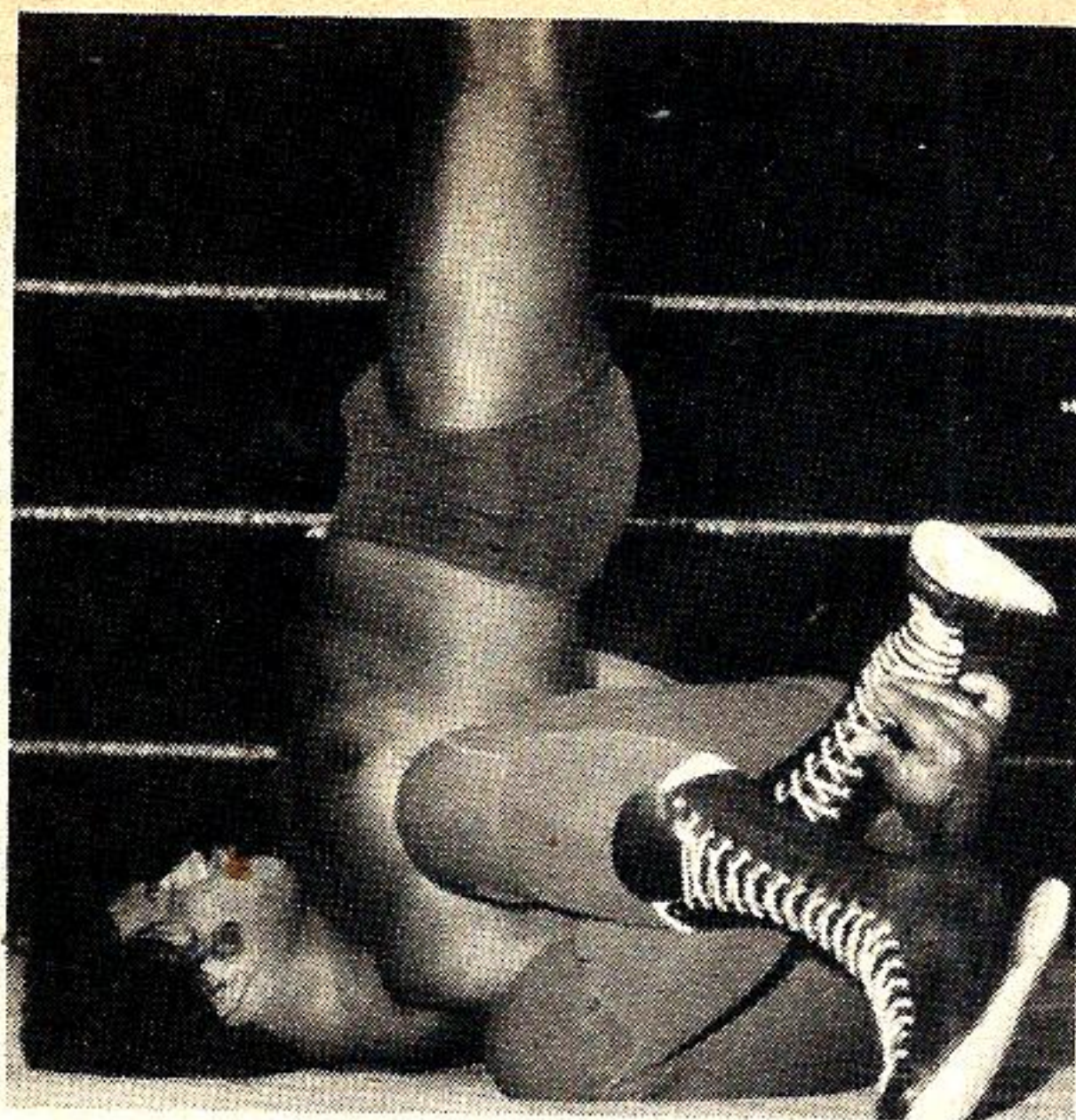
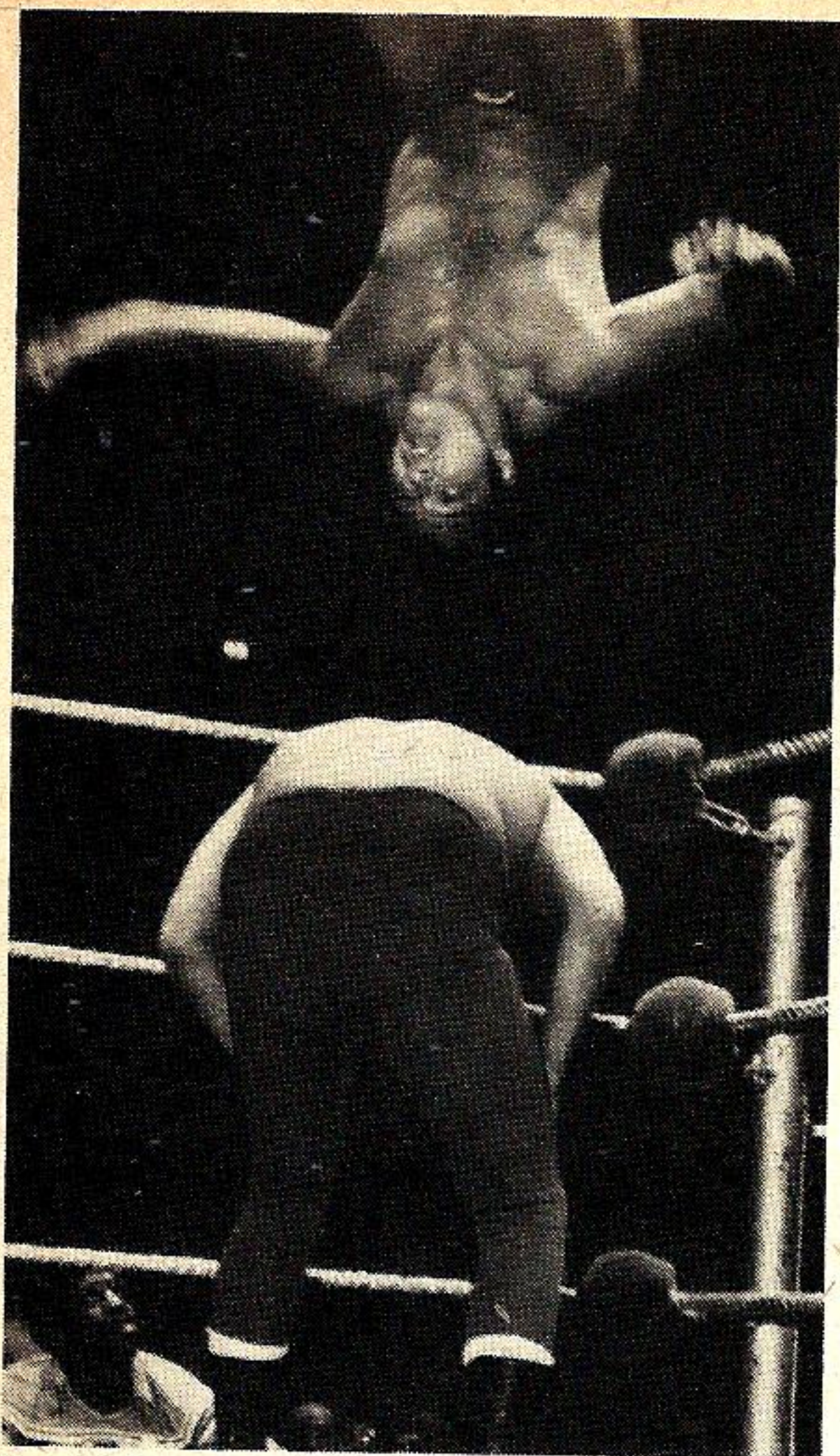
The only time he wasn't pacing was during the match. He tore into his

opponent, Rocky Tamayo, like a lion killing its prey. One almost imagined him enraged at Tamayo for daring to wrestle him. Fans were awestruck by Chavo's explosive power and intensity. Guerrero's victory was the conquest of a demon over a human being.

The only time Guerrero appeared relaxed was for a few moments after the match. He sat down on a bench in the dressing room, leaned back against the locker, and allowed his body to go limp. For the only time anyone can remember, Chavo smiled without looking poised for attack. It was a short respite. The young man went back into his tension shell as soon as reporters started asking him questions.

"I came to New York," Chavo stated in staccato speech, "to add to my reputation. The world has to know how good I am. I have to become champion soon. People are depending on me. They are awaiting the day I get to the top. I don't have time to sit back. There is no time. People depend on me.

"They're getting restless, my backers, the men who invested money in my future. They're getting restless. They need a championship. A million dollars was placed in trust for me, put there by Mexico's wealthiest men. That's a lot of faith. I owe them results. No time to sit around or build slowly. Next time I come to New York, I won't



Tamayo is stunned as Chavo thrills the fans with his famous Mexican backflip (left). Rocky tries to pin Chavo, but that will only last a moment (above). Chavo turns the tables (below) on his way to victory. The talented Chavo relaxes in his dressing room by reading *INSIDE WRESTLING* (right).

PHOTOS BY BILL APTER



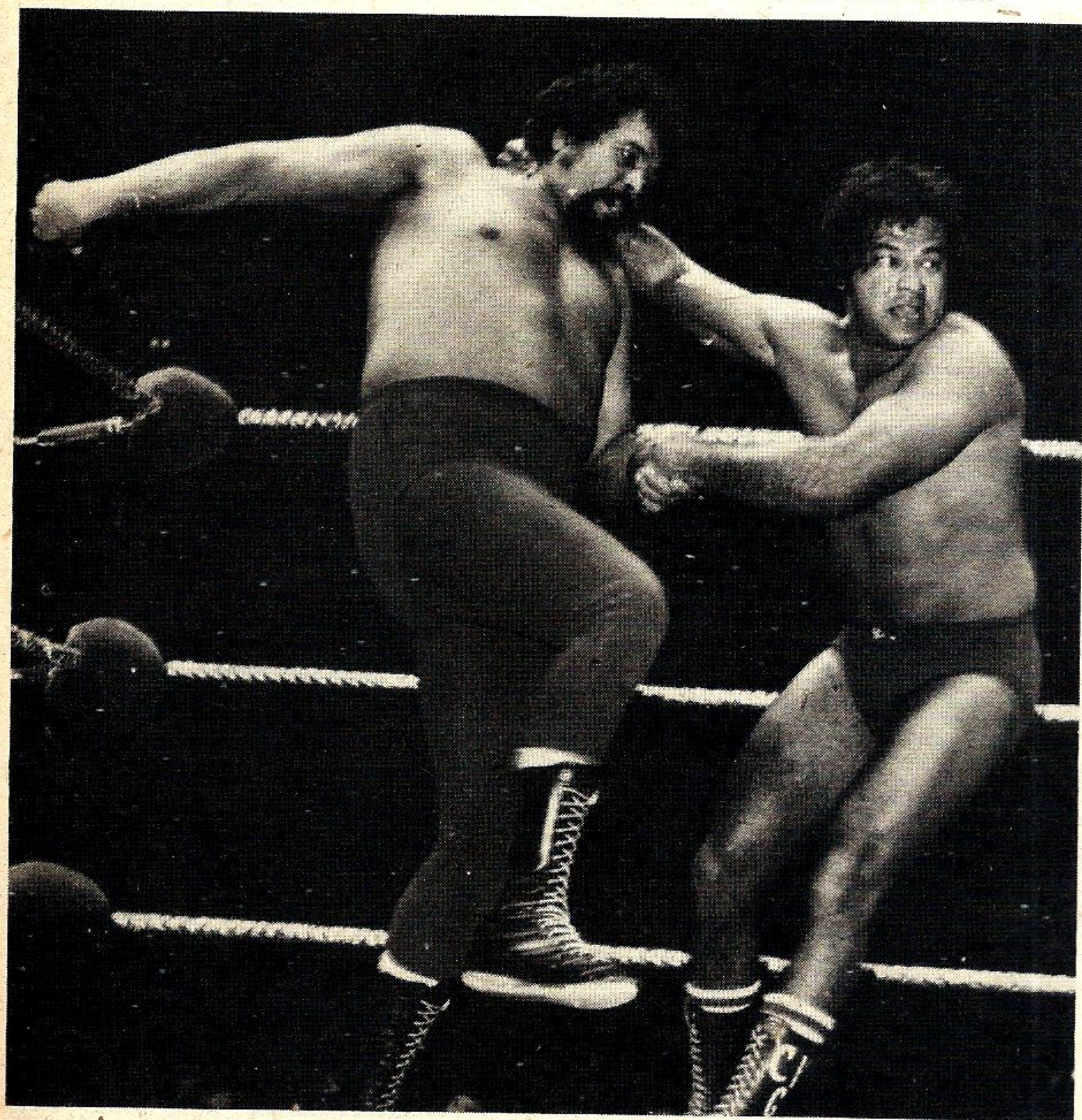
be more than one match away from title."

"Do you find yourself under any pressure from these people?" a reporter asked, more worried than inquisitive. It's hard to be unaffected by the sight of a young man consuming himself.

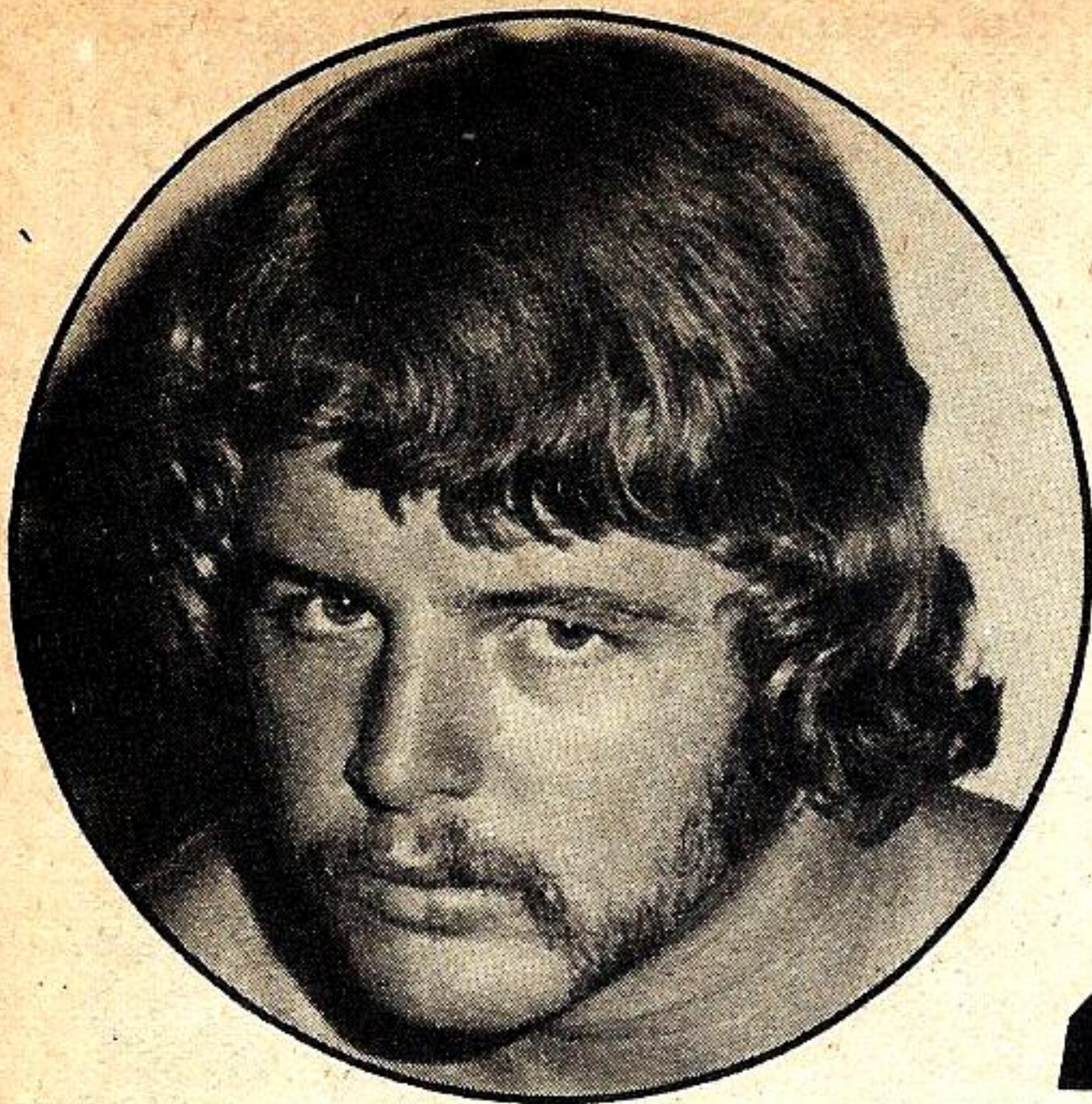
"No pressure at all," Chavo stated quickly, "they've been great. But they have a right to results. The people of Mexico have a right to a world wrestling champion. I am their hope, the hope of my people. Remember that. I'm wrestling for more than myself. Much more than myself."

The reporters didn't question the young man further. They knew all they needed to know; more than they wanted to know. A wrestling career is pressure enough for any young man to handle. To carry the hopes of a nation besides is an intolerable burden. Whether the motivation comes from the country or only his own mind, a man could easily be destroyed by this enormous responsibility.

Chavo Guerrero could be crushed beneath the weight of his mission. All young grapplers must grow slowly in the profession. A man brought along too quickly sees his career destroyed. So far, Chavo has managed to survive. Someday, he can be one of the great ones. He can also be one of those described as "a hell of a prospect who burned himself out. Too bad." □



A young man is driven by ambition and obligation to grab a prize beyond his reach and is destroyed in the hopeless attempt. Is this going to be the fate of Chavo Guerrero? Is the dream come true now a nightmare?



BY MIKE GRAHAM

MY FATHER ALWAYS taught me to have respect for my elders, including my three uncles, Luke, Jerry, and Billy Graham. All right. I have tried to accept what my father taught me. I trust him. I try to heed what he tells me. But there comes a time when a son must disagree with his father.

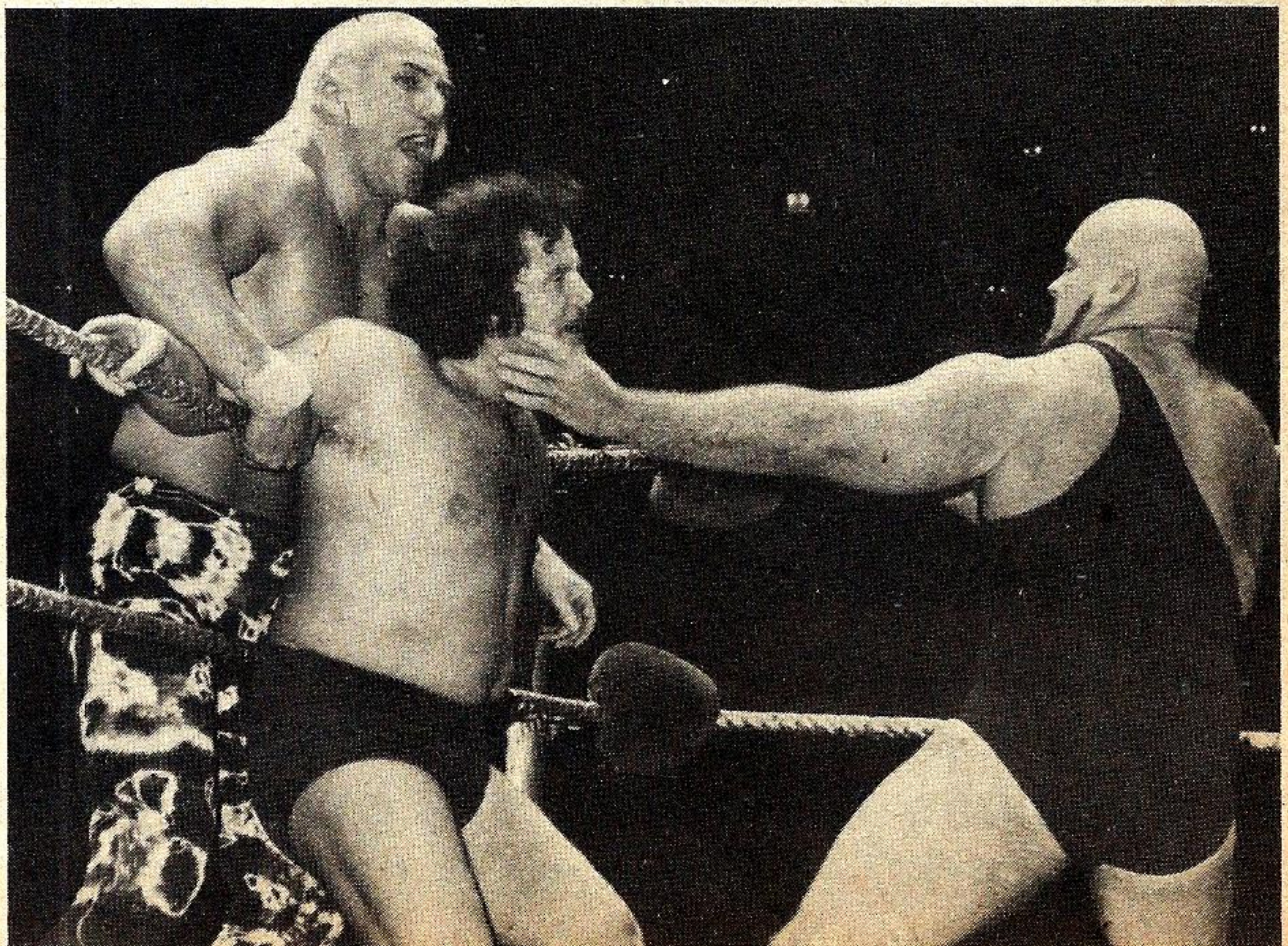
The time is now.

When I was very young, I always looked up to my uncles. In my early childhood, only my father, my Uncle Jerry, and my Uncle Luke were in wrestling. Then Uncle Billy, who is just a few years older than me, joined their profession. At first, this move was welcomed by the family. Then suddenly, Uncle Billy became *persona non grata* around the house. He moved on to other parts of the country. I never knew why.

I occasionally heard reports regarding Uncle Billy's activities. I tried very hard not to believe what I heard. Friends of mine would come up to me and ask if I had heard the latest story about my uncle being unnecessarily cruel against some opponents. I had to listen to many such stories throughout my adolescence. I tried not to listen.

When I made the decision to become a professional wrestler myself, many local promoters wished me well. But several of them took me aside and cautioned, "Just don't become like your uncle, Superstar Graham. You're a nice kid, and I'd hate to see you turn out like he did." I always told them they had nothing to worry about; that I planned to be a strictly scientific wrestler; that I really couldn't believe Uncle Billy was as bad as they said he was.

Mike Graham's Heartbreaking Confession: "SUPERSTAR GRAHAM IS A DISGRACE TO MY FAMILY!"



I think my father wanted to protect me. That must have been the reason for him not letting me know just how evil a man my uncle was. But he should have known I would find out the truth someday.

Whenever I asked my father about Uncle Billy's activities, he would give me a non-answer answer. He would try to change the subject, or try to give as evasive an answer as possible. I understand this now, though it did confuse me at the time.

A few months ago, Uncle Billy called and said he was coming home. He had made all the arrangements and he would soon start wrestling in Florida. The prospect excited me. I really did like Uncle Billy. At times, he can be quite a charming, witty fellow. And he really had never stayed for any great length of time since he became a professional wrestler.

Over the past few years, I have tried to earn a certain reputation with the people in Florida. I strive to be a fan favorite. My father, I know, has tried—and succeeded—to earn the respect of those in the wrestling community since he became president of the NWA. I guess I was being naive, but I thought Uncle Billy would try to follow along the same lines as my father and myself.

On the night of Uncle Billy's Florida debut, I sat in the audience, waiting to see him wrestle. It would be the first time I would have the chance to see him wrestle in person. Let me tell you, I was shocked and ashamed by what I witnessed. My uncle was doing things in the ring which I hate. How could any Graham be so evil? It was beyond my comprehension.

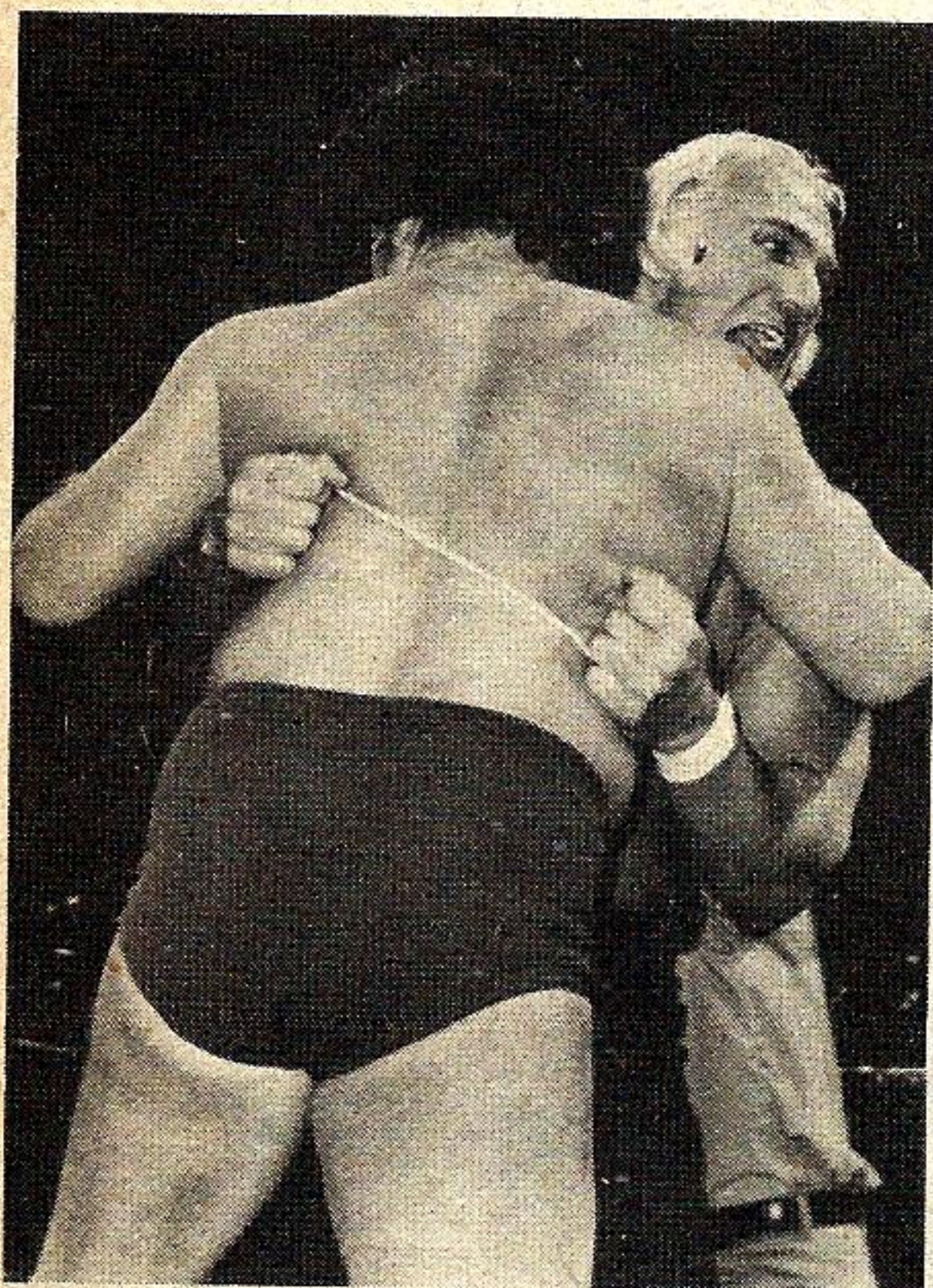
I tried very hard to forget what I had seen. Maybe, I thought to myself, I had

just seen him on a bad night. Maybe he was nervous and thought he had to resort to rulebreaking tactics in order to win his first match in Florida. I tried to find any excuse to rationalize the behavior of my uncle. Believe me, it was difficult.

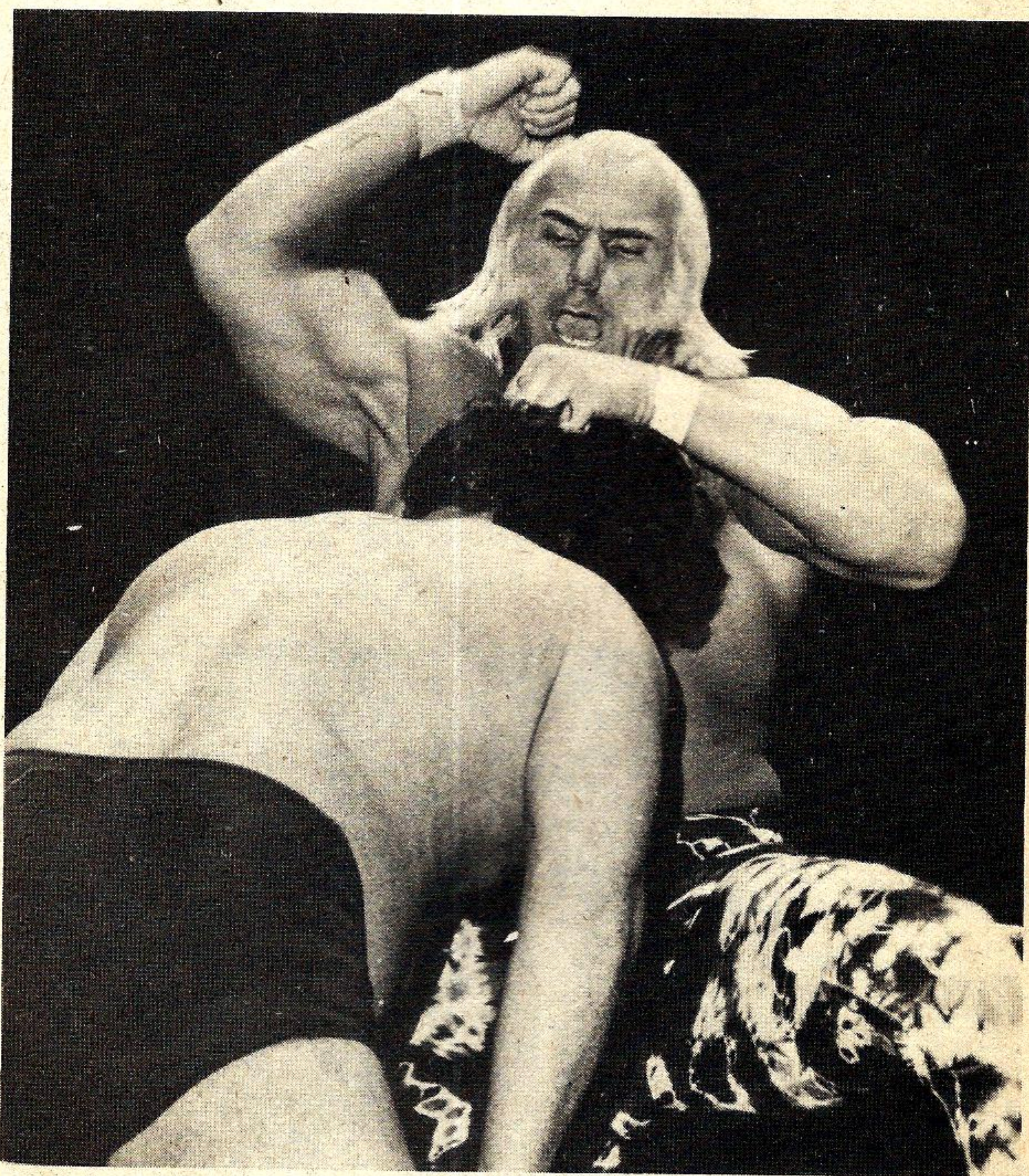
I might have succeeded, if it had not been for the match in which Uncle Billy won the Florida title from Dusty Rhodes. I could not excuse what Uncle Billy did to him. I saw it. It was a vicious, bloody battle which I would rather forget. But I cannot forget. I cannot forgive. I cannot rationalize my uncle's behavior anymore.

My uncle, Superstar Graham, is a disgrace to my family! It really hurts me to say that, but I must. I know I am defying my father in speaking out against a member of my own family, but it is something I must do as a man.

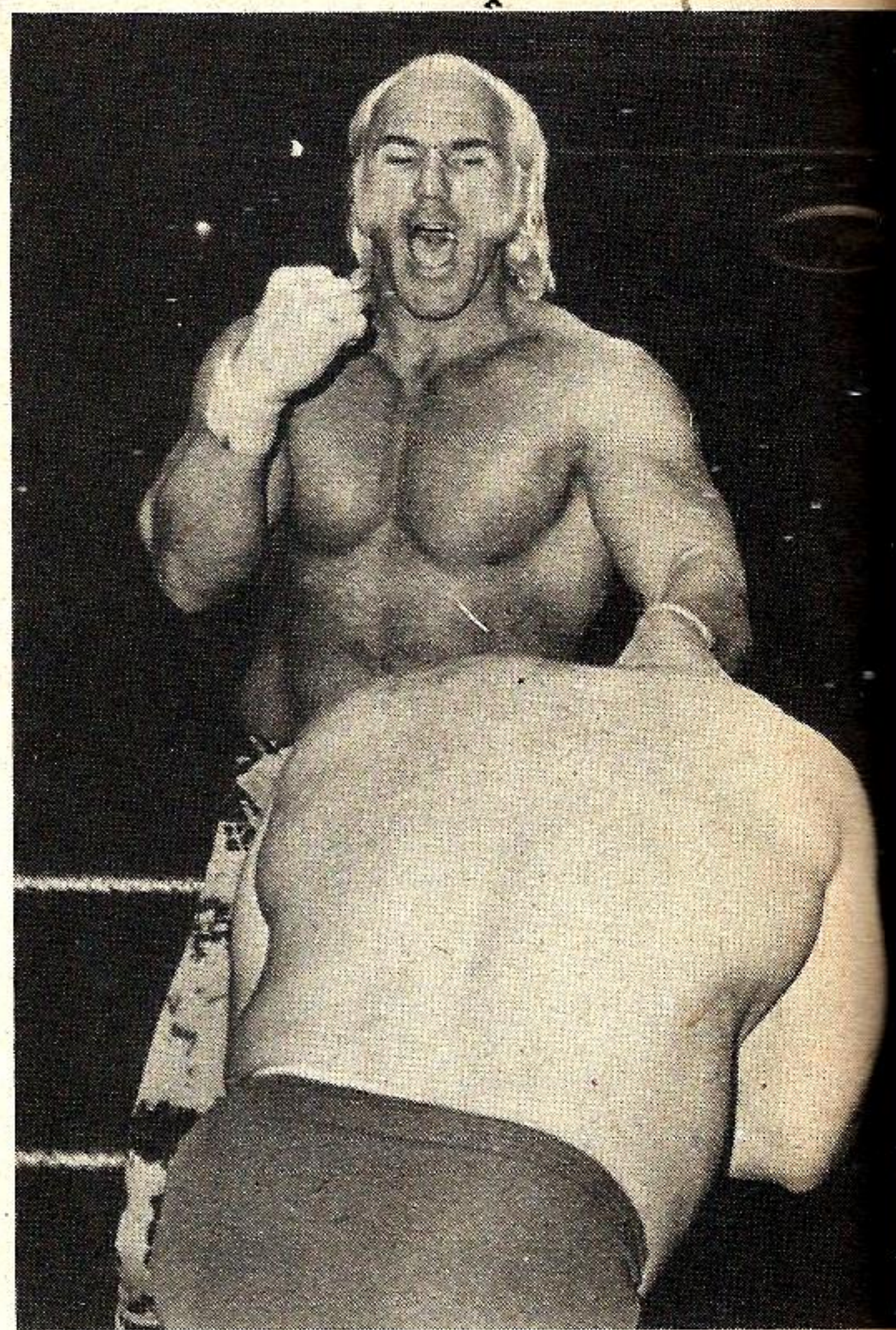
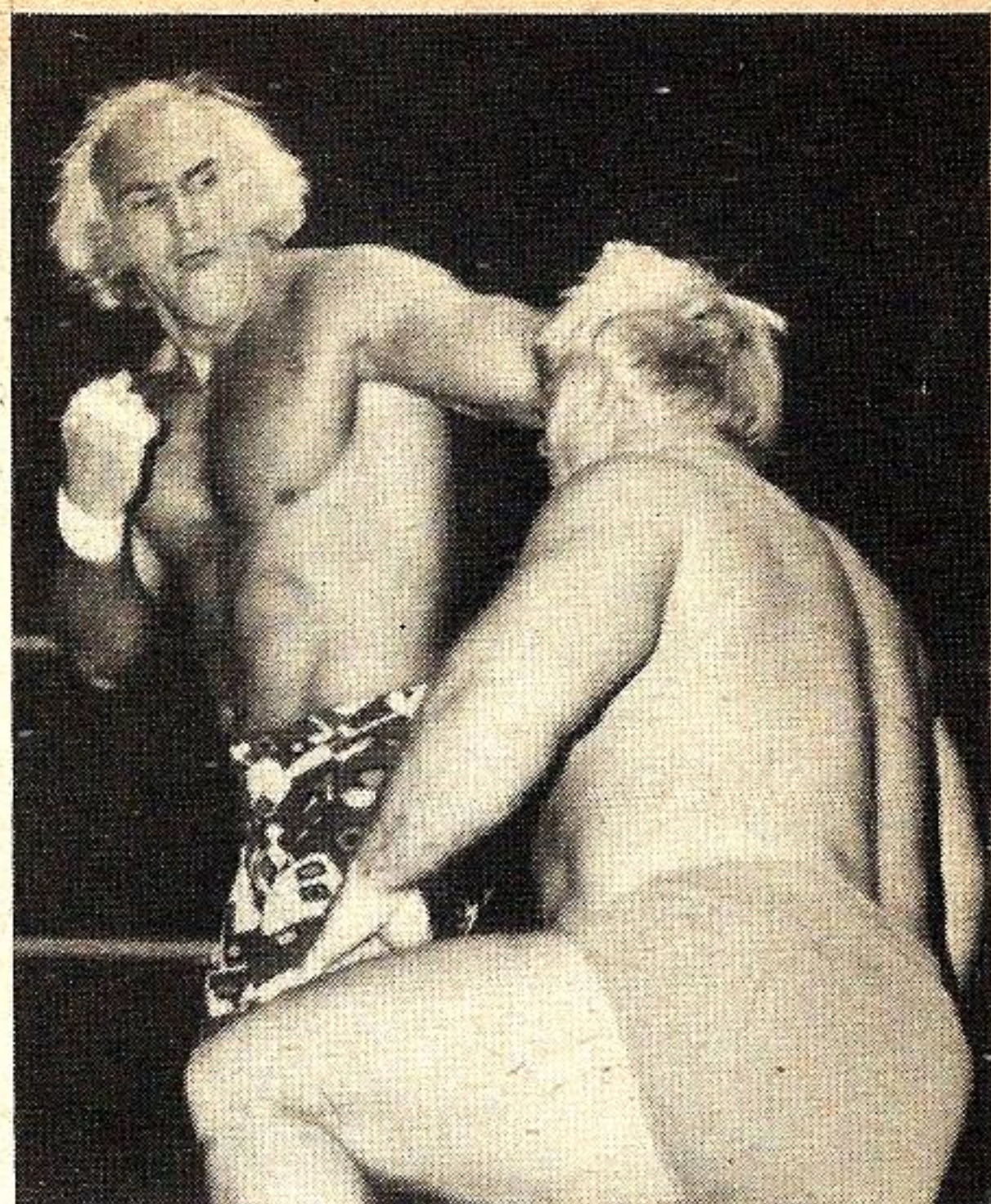
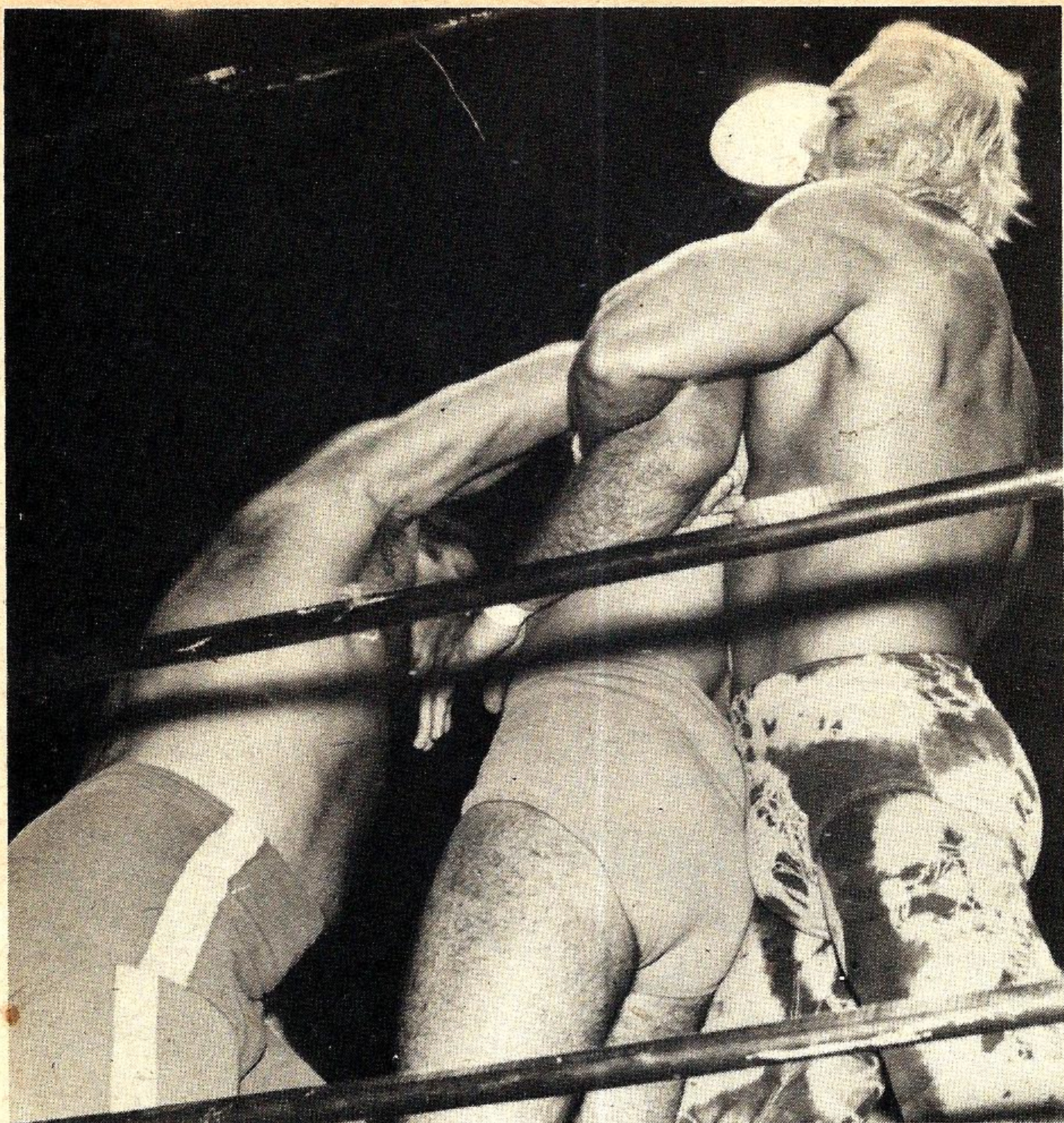
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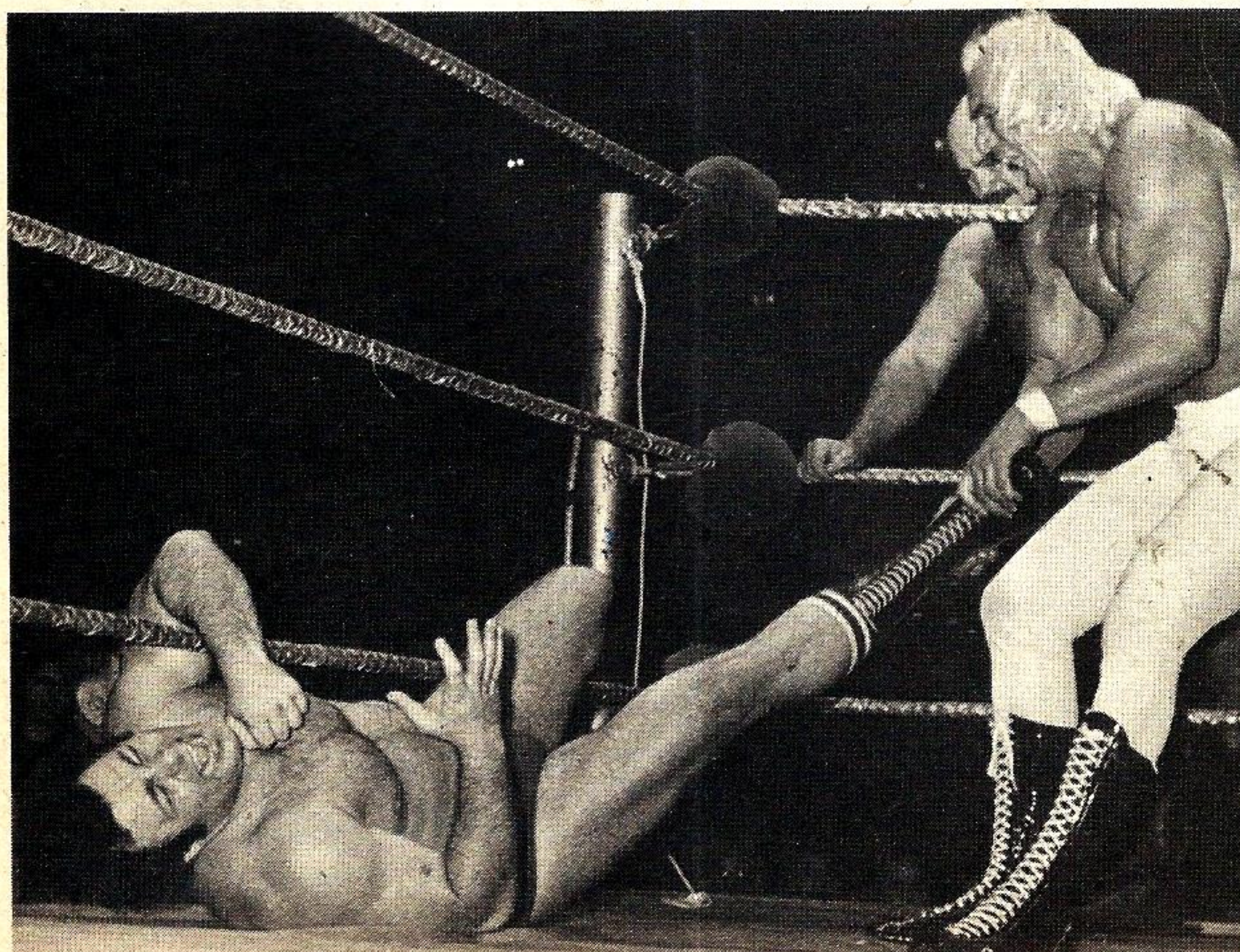
Using a rope to help destroy his adversary (above) is just one thing Mike Graham hates about his uncle. With help from Ivan Koloff (left, opposite page) Graham tortures Pat Barrett. Pulling hair and elbowsmashing (right) are something Superstar loves and Mike looks down upon.



Some things, no matter how painful, must be said. Mike Graham believes his family's honor is being dragged through the mud and it has to stop. This is why Mike Graham, with the permission of his family, publicly calls his uncle an insult to the family and to wrestling!



Together with Superstar, John Tolos helps destroy a hapless opponent (above). A clenched fist is about to connect with Crusher's forehead (above right). Mike Graham would never be seen throwing punches. Superstar tries to inflict punishment on poor Ivan Putski (right). Louis Cerdan's leg is all but broken as Superstar and Koloff go about their evil ways (below).



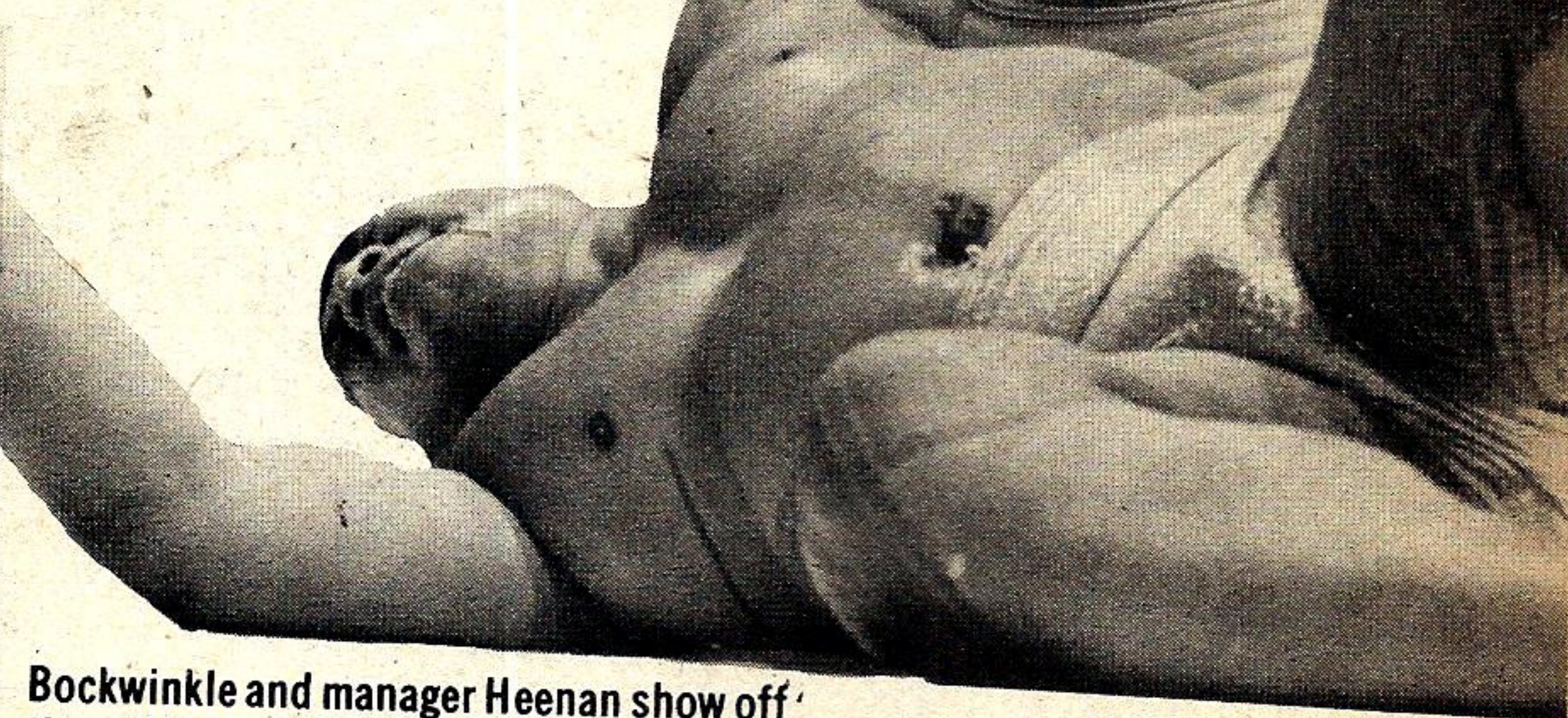
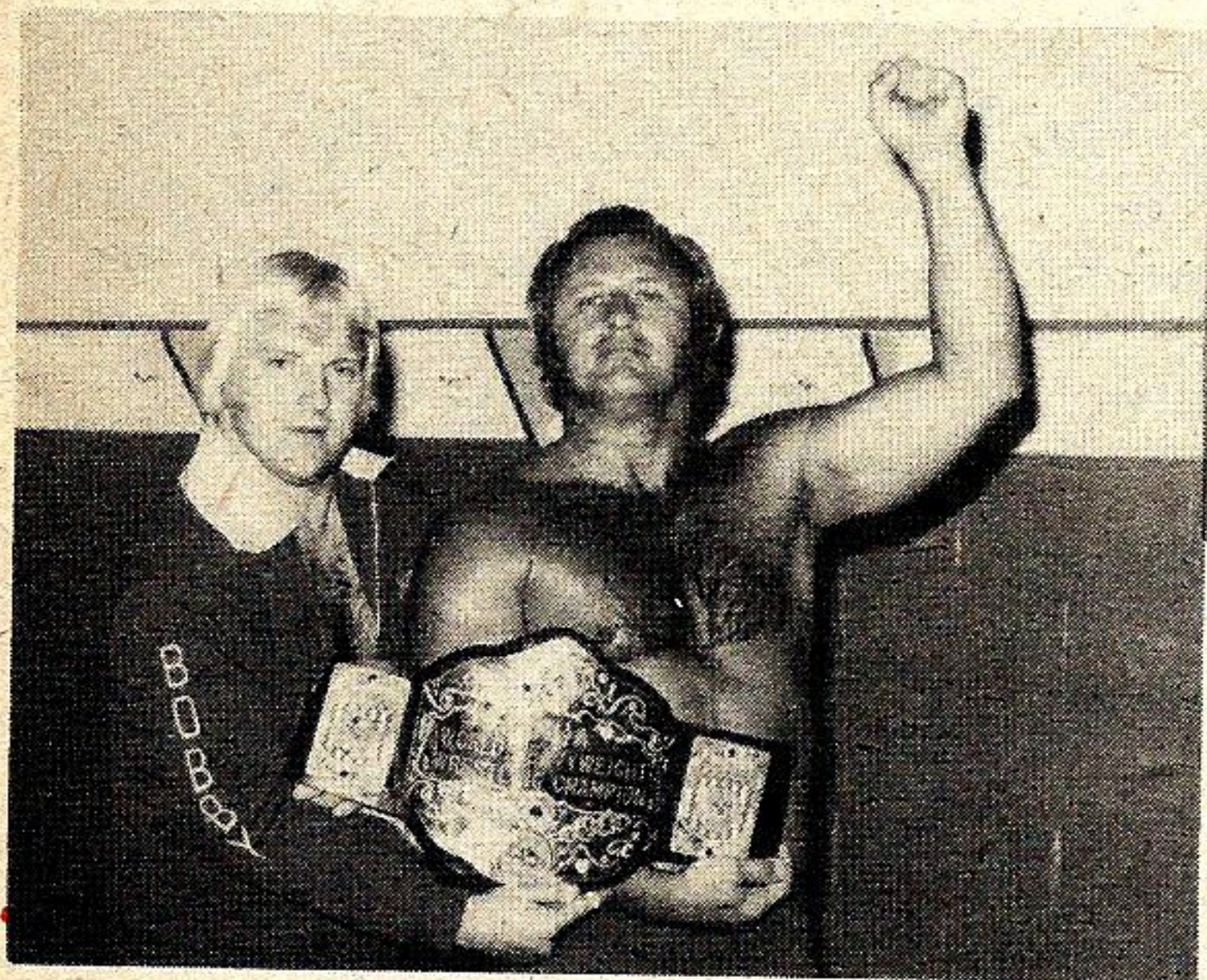
I must.

In the best of all possible worlds, my uncle would go away from Florida, change his name, and let the Graham family forget he ever even existed. But this is not the best of all possible worlds. Uncle Billy will not go away. He will use the Graham name for his own evil purposes. How I wish I could change that!

I hope my father will understand why I have had to speak out against his youngest brother. I hope he will understand why I have had to disown a Graham and everything he does. Though family love is very important to me, my principles come first.

As far as I am concerned, I no longer have an Uncle Billy. That man who calls himself Superstar Billy Graham is no relation to me! □

NICK BOCKWINKLE: THE CHAMPION WHO SITS ON A SHAKY THRONE



Bockwinkle and manager Heenan show off the title belt (left). A short armbar expertly applied by Nick (above).

Though he's champion, Nick Bockwinkle feels more like a prisoner than king. Around him circle the challengers, the taste of glory on their tongues and the smell of the kill inflaming their nostrils

PHOTOS BY BOB RUIZ

IT'S A STRANGE sensation walking into a dressing room in the AWA area. There's a hungry tension in the room. Each grappler thinks he could be the next champion. The title waits for the man lucky enough to be in the right place at the right time.

Peter Maivia wants to be that man. He has the title taste in his mouth; that sweet taunting which craves full satisfaction. His hunger for the top prize is evident in every move he makes. Peter doesn't deny it. He wants the title and is sure of getting it.

"Nick Bockwinkle is ready to fall," Peter declares, echoing the sentiments of almost every AWA

grappler. "He can't remain the champion much longer. He's having trouble with Heenan, who may be trying to sabotage him. Nick can't survive without Heenan's full help. He's scared, Nick is. You can see it in his eyes. He moves like a man who fears his time has come. And I might as well be the man to replace him.

"I've never been this close to a championship. It feels good, you know? No, only a wrestler can know what I mean. It does something to you, heightens senses and makes everything stand out. Jokes are funnier and food tastes better. Matches become more important. After all, a title shot is on the line.

And all of a sudden, some guy named Nick Bockwinkle becomes the most important person in the world."

Maivia isn't the only man consumed by the status of Nick Bockwinkle. Rumors are traded with lightning speed in any AWA dressing room. Everyone is sure Bockwinkle's last match was his worst. Any day now. Any day now.

One would think Bockwinkle would be shouting to the world that all the rumors were false. Any other champion could be counted on to battle back with any means at his control. Yet, Bockwinkle just sits there, talking to no one, letting

(Continued on page 62)

Funk vs Lothario

SOMETIMES A MAN can think too much. Case in point—Terry Funk. He “over-thought” himself into one hell of a loss which almost cost him the NWA title.

Of course, Terry Funk would never admit he allowed such a thing to happen. But the facts speak for themselves. In the forum of public opinion, Terry Funk made a huge mistake, and he paid dearly for it.

The case against Funk can be stated clearly enough: he was under the delusion he was being persecuted by ex-NWA champion Jack Brisco (see related story in *INSIDE WRESTLING*/March 1977). This was quite far from the truth.

But when Terry Funk gets an idea into his head, nothing can get it out of there. It is like a sore which festers and swells and grows uglier with every passing day. In this situation, the idea that Brisco was persecuting him grew in Terry's mind from a passing thought to an overriding obsession. And that's when Funk began to think too much.

Terry got it into his head that he was being set up. Everywhere he went he saw Jack Brisco. So Terry figured that at some point along the line, an opponent he was scheduled to meet would back out, and Brisco would be the substitute. That way, Jack would benefit from the element of surprise, overcome Terry

HOW TERRY FUNK DEFEATED HIMSELF

PHOTOS BY JIM CALDWELL

Funk, and win back his championship.

Funk had a good idea of how that scheme worked; he had done the same thing to win the title from Brisco in the first place.

Sometimes it is a grave error to suspect someone of motives as dark as your own. This was the error Funk made, and it nearly cost him his title.

After Terry had gotten the notion in his head that Brisco was there to stand in for some future opponent, there was no way to stop the evil thought processes. Funk began to look through his schedule of upcoming matches to see who he

would be wrestling. After studying the list for many hours—and weighing the possibility of each man's willingness to conspire with Jack Brisco—Terry finally selected one man who he thought would be willing to let Brisco fill in as a substitute and regain the title.

In Terry's mind, that man was Jose Lothario.

Those around the champion who knew of his twisted thoughts tried to convince Funk the whole thing was in his mind; that Jack Brisco would not substitute for Lothario; that Jose would never allow that to happen. But no one could convince

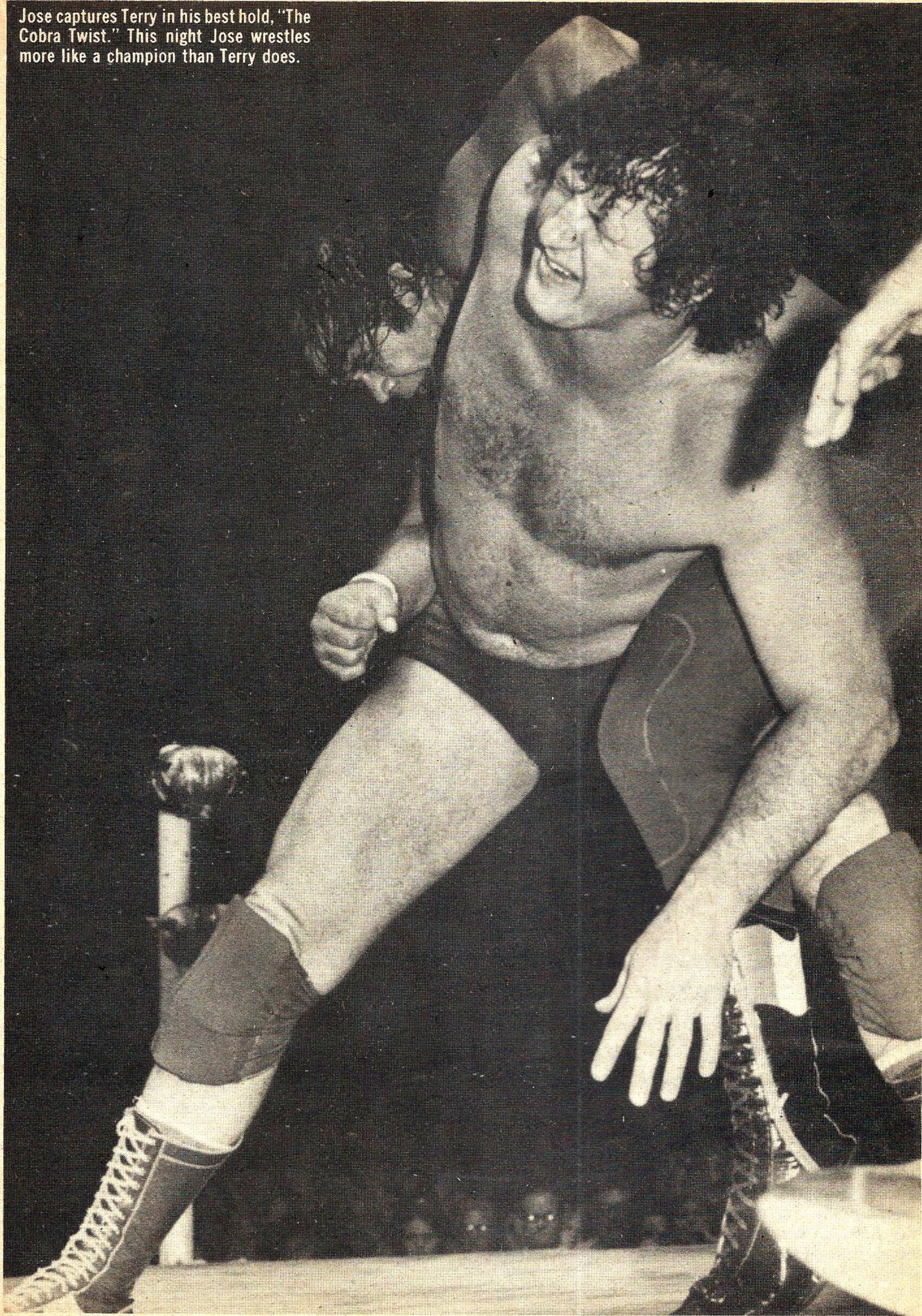
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Jose Lothario digs his fingers into Terry Funk's abdominal muscles and the champion screams in agony.

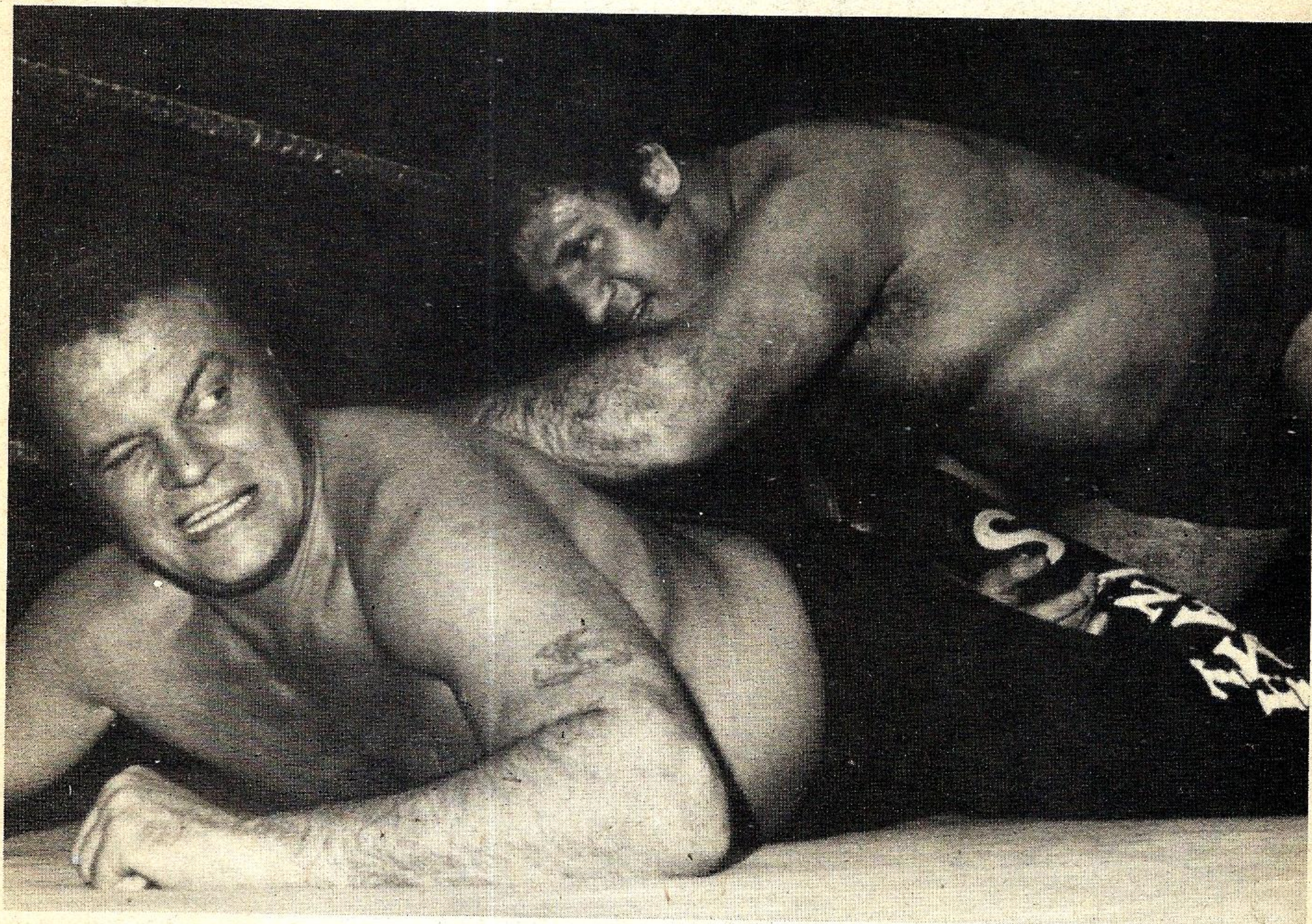


Terry Funk is a smart grappler, knowing every angle and taking advantage of every technicality. But one night, Funk proved to be a little too smooth, a little too smart. It almost cost him his championship!

Jose captures Terry in his best hold, "The Cobra Twist." This night Jose wrestles more like a champion than Terry does.



WHY STAN STASIAK SPARED BRUNO SAMMARTINO



Everyone knows Stan Stasiak is one of the most savage men in wrestling, merciless in every encounter. Yet, on one night, unknown to almost everyone, Stasiak decided to let Bruno Sammartino remain WWF champion. Here, for the first time, is the true story behind the only decent moment in Stan Stasiak's life

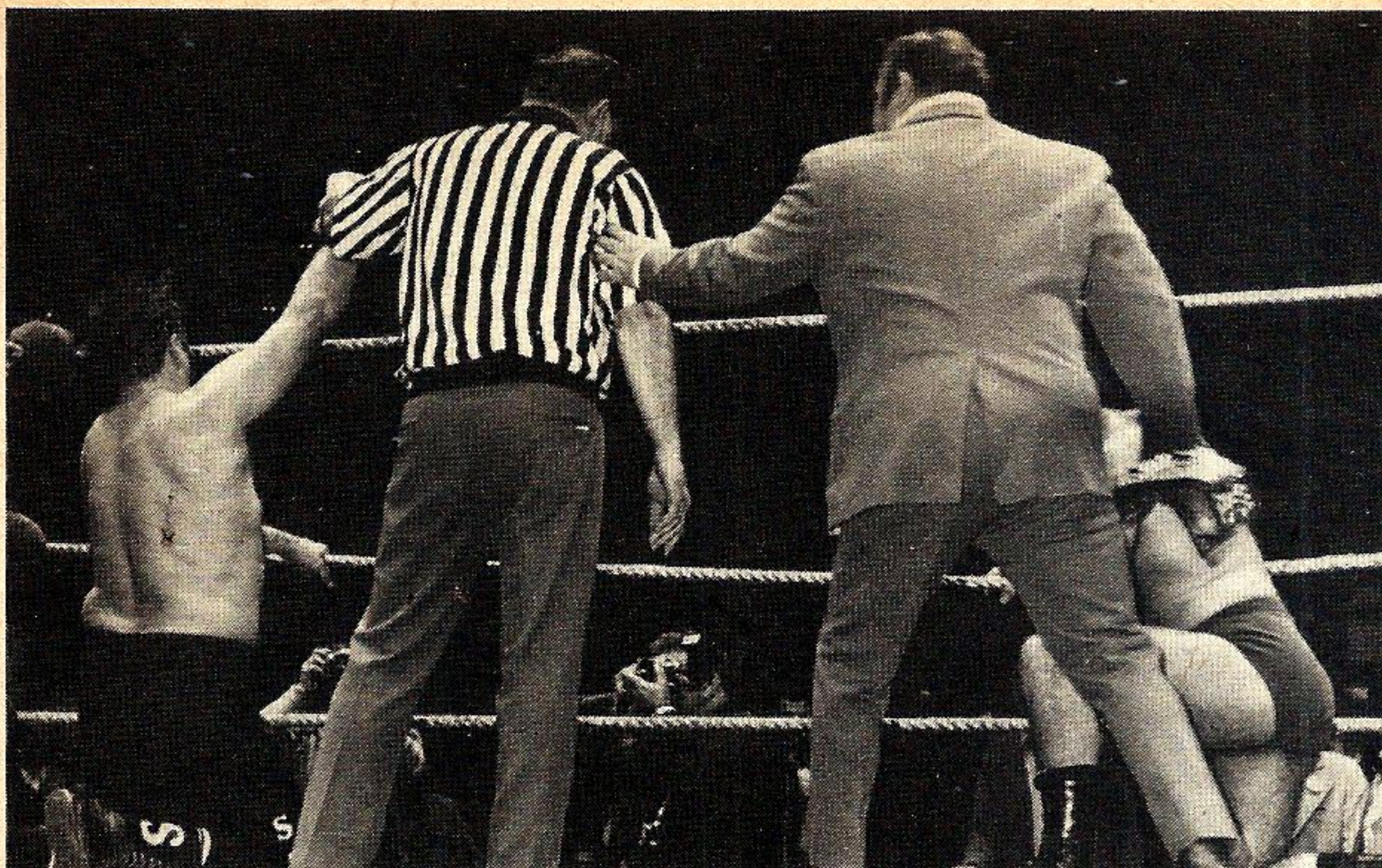
A CRIPPLED OLD WOMAN hobbled out of the doctor's office. Her tattered clothes, paper shopping bag, and windblown white hair made her appear a beggar rather than a patient.

Stan Stasiak passed the aged woman on his way into the office. An involuntary shudder passed through

Stasiak's body. All athletes fear the gnarled torsos of old age. Seeing the elderly reminds them only too clearly of the shortness of their careers. Stasiak breathed a sigh of relief when the shapeless old hag boarded the elevator.

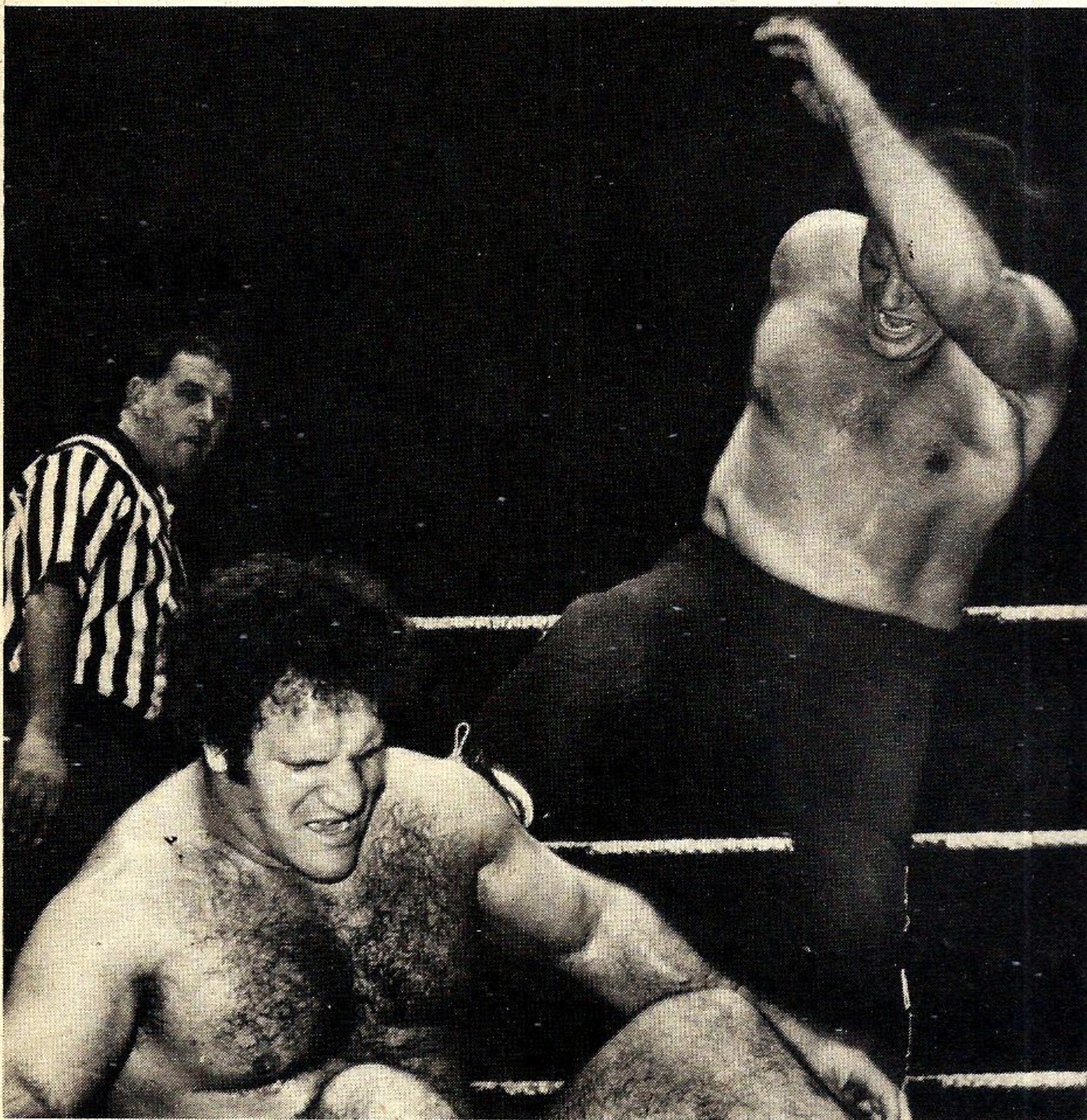
Stasiak had come for his yearly check-up—three months early. Stan

wanted to make sure nothing was wrong before his title match against Bruno Sammartino. Stan trusted this doctor, the man who cured all his injuries over the years. The physician enjoyed one of the best reputations in New York. Stasiak knew when he left the office, he would be in the best shape possible.



Bruno applies a toehold on former champion Stan Stasiak (left, opposite page). The match is over (above) and Stasiak's arm is raised in victory. Arnold Skoaland, Bruno's manager, momentarily protests the decision. A kick at the champion's back (below) sees him in trouble early in the match.

PHOTOS BY BILL APTER



"Didn't know you took charity patients," Stasiak snarled to the doctor, callously referring to the old woman who had just left. "When I come here I expect to see class, not gutter refugees. You should be more careful. Now you'll have to call an exterminator."

The doctor stared silently at his

patient for a few moments, then replied, "Never let a doctor get angry at you. There's enough in my office to make you a walking vegetable. I can put you in more pain than a regiment of karate experts. So from now on, I'd suggest a more respectful tone when speaking of the lady who was kind enough to let me serve her. If you're

lucky, someday you'll be fine enough to worship the ground she walks on."

Stasiak's shocked expression forced the doctor to explain. "That woman used to be one of the loveliest, kindest, most intelligent women in New York. She's responsible for helping more doctors, artists, lawyers and writers than any 15 other human beings in the world. All she asked was dedication. She would supply the means for opening an office and gathered for the novice patients, clients, and patrons. That was years ago.

"For all her goodness, she seems to have forgotten to care for herself. The people who owe her everything, a lot of them failed to pay her back. Too noble to demand her just reward, she now scrounges for survival. A few of those she helped, myself included, give her what we can without hurting her pride. It's a struggle to keep her alive."

Stasiak was feeling stupid for his insensitivity. "Anything I can do to help?" he asked, sure there was nothing.

"In fact," the doctor began as Stasiak grew nervous, "there is something you can do. As I said, the woman worships greatness. I know this is asking a lot, and I wouldn't ask it for any other human being on earth, but could you get her introduced to Bruno Sammartino?"

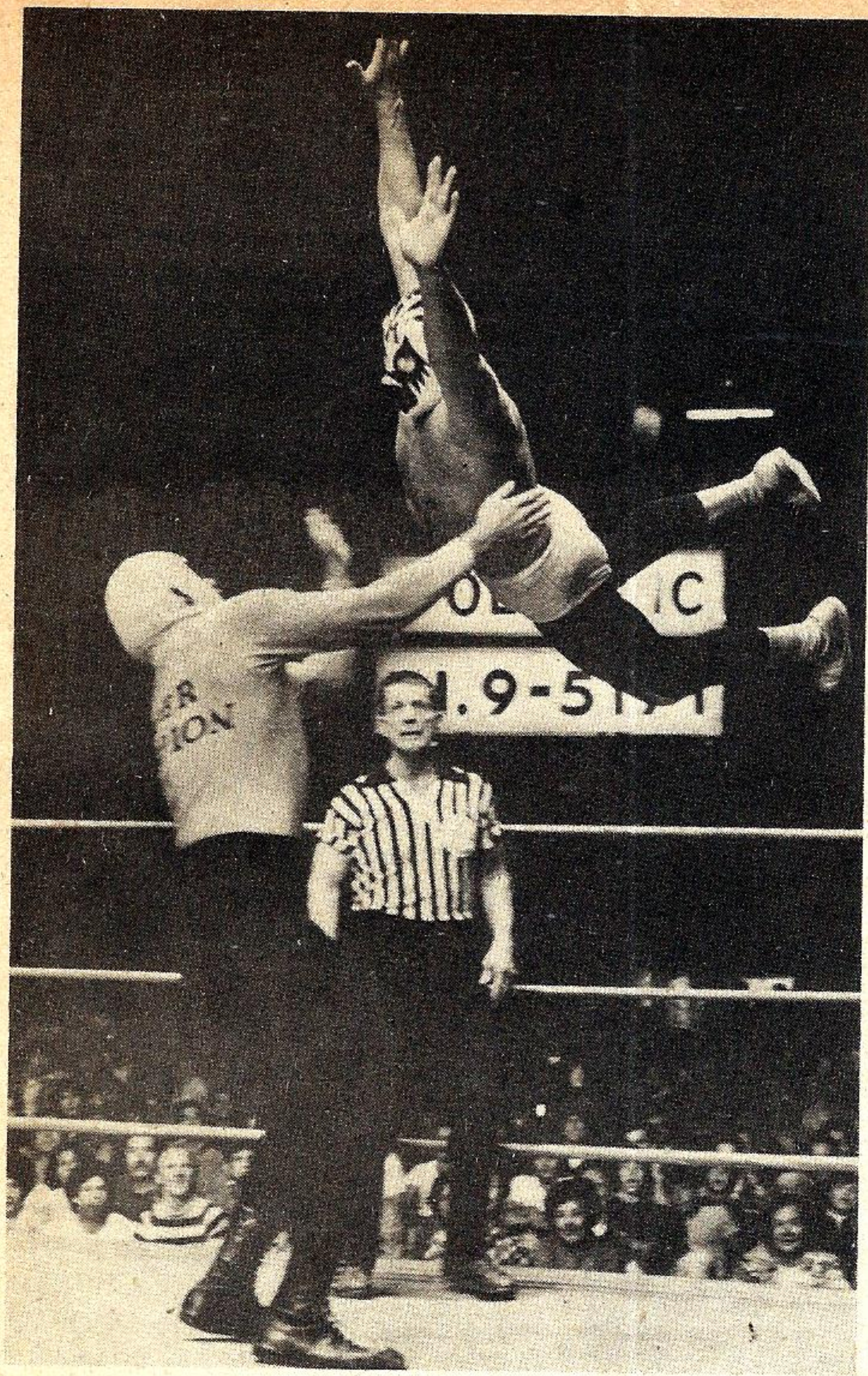
"What!" Stan screamed, his face reddening as the veins in his neck stood out. "You want me to ask a favor of that bum, the man I'm going to defeat tomorrow night for the title? I hate him more than anyone else in the world! How can you ask it?"

"As I said," the physician replied, "she worships greatness. A champion to her is the most important person alive. Sammartino is champion. For her to once again be in the company of a champion, even for only a few moments, would mean the world to her. She loves Sammartino. In fact, if I didn't know better, I'd ask you not to try to take his title. Bruno's championship, knowing he has the belt, is one of the things keeping her alive."

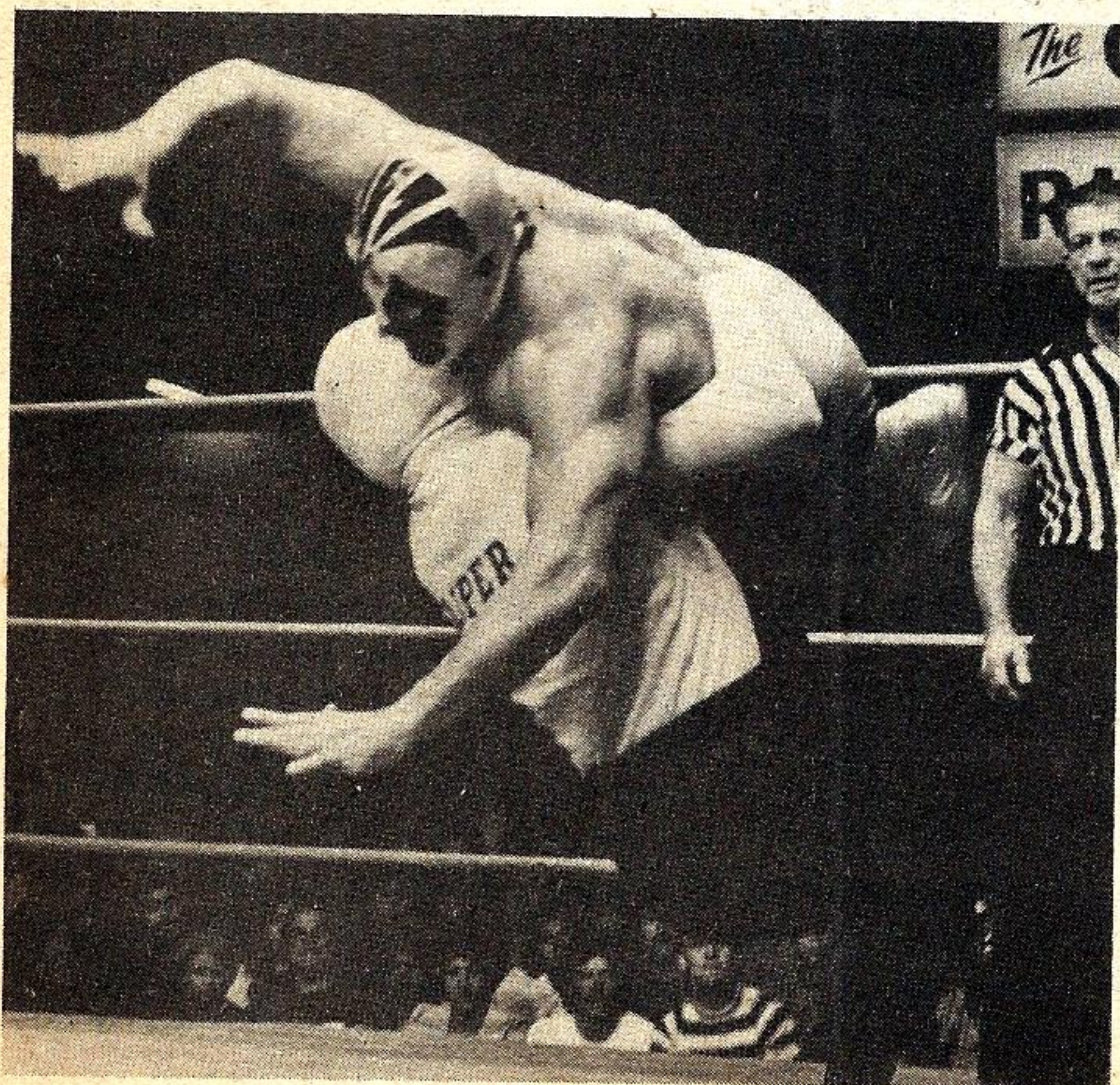
"You mean," Stasiak screamed, doing horrible things to his blood pressure, "not take his title! Just for some old . . . elderly stranger. I'll tell you what. I'll get her a ringside ticket to the match. But you'd better be ready to treat her for critical heartbreak. Because I'm taking that title!"

The doctor thanked Stasiak and checked the grappler from head to toe. Stan was in perfect physical shape.

(Continued on page 58)



The inimitable Mil Mascaras flying bodypress (above) takes its toll on the Super Scorpion. The final result (below) as Mil topples his masked adversary to gain the victory.



THE REAL REASON MIL MASCARAS RETURNED TO CALIFORNIA

PHOTOS BY THEO EHRET

THE APPROPRIATENESS of the name "Sunset Boulevard" had never struck Mil Mascaras before this day. For along this wide Los Angeles street thousands of lives saw their final days. Careers foundered. The sun set. The end.

The mid-1960's were troubled years in America. Many people began to examine the basic tenets of life and found them wanting. The beliefs they had so long held began to look false and hideous. Some people saw this as a problem which they must set out to solve for themselves. Others saw it as a reason to drop out of society, and let others worry about principles.

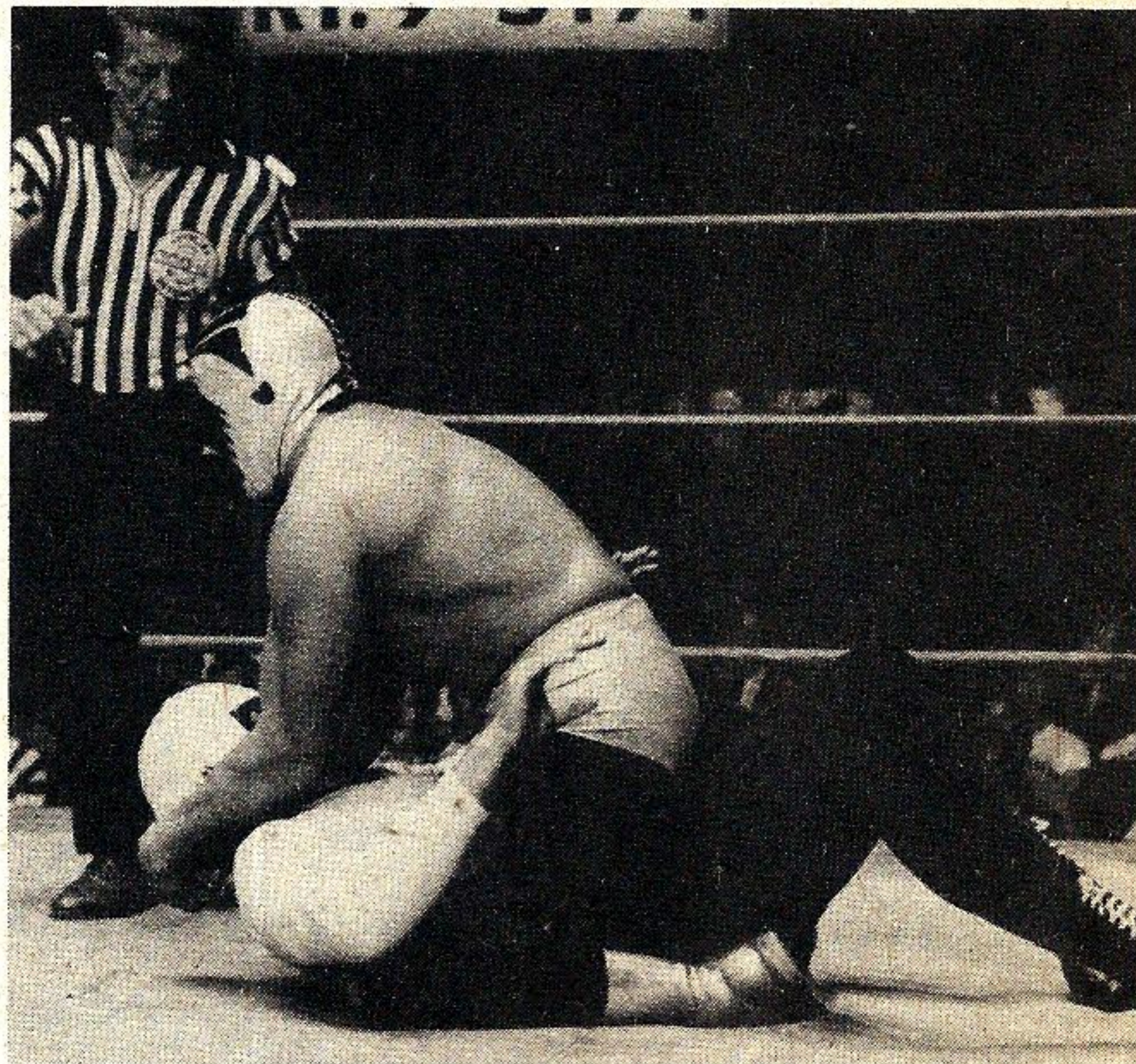
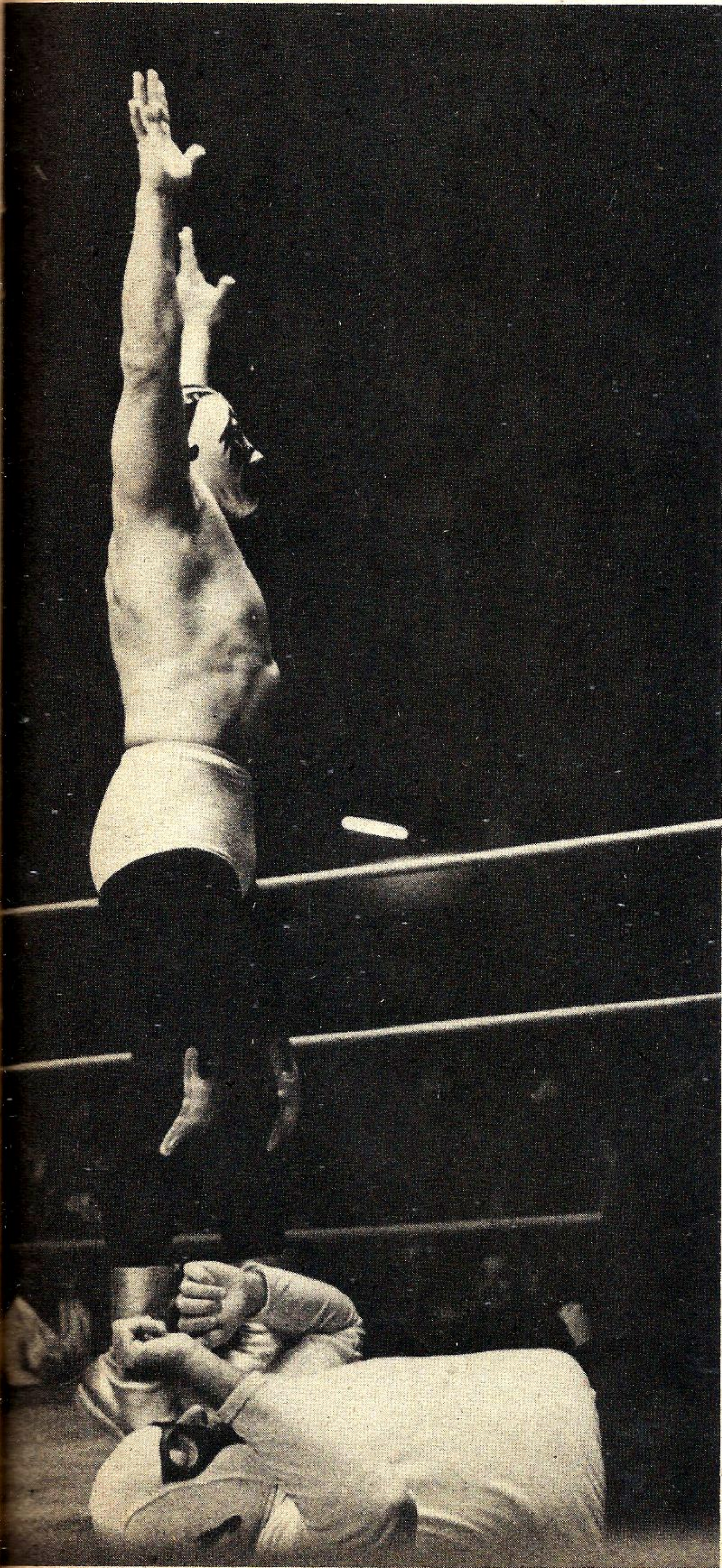
A man, who must have been in excellent physical condition once, ambles slowly down Sunset Boulevard toward his apartment in a rundown neighborhood along this famous roadway. He is one of these drop outs from the '60s. He has no need for politics. He just gets by from day to day. He has no desire to get back to what he once was.

The man had been a wrestler at one time. He had been very good. Many people thought he had the makings of a champion. But one day he realized that was not what he wanted out of life. He hated the dog-eat-dog competition the wrestling life demanded. The violent aspects of the sport never appealed to him.

Rather than try and reconcile himself to the problems he faced between his personal life and his professional life, he dropped out. He quit being a wrestler. He fled from public view. He pursued more ordinary interests.

Of course, the man could not totally forsake his interest in wrestling. It had been a large part of his life. It

What makes a man return to the place where it all began? Mil Mascaras, older and wiser than when he first conquered California wrestling has come back again. Here is why Mil is drawn back to his past in the hopes of saving his future



Super Scorpion lies on the mat a picture of defeat as Mil parades around the ring (left). The fans give him a well deserved ovation. From the onset, it was obvious Super Scorpion was in for the toughest match of his career (above).

had taken up many of his days and nights. He could not just behave like those years had never happened.

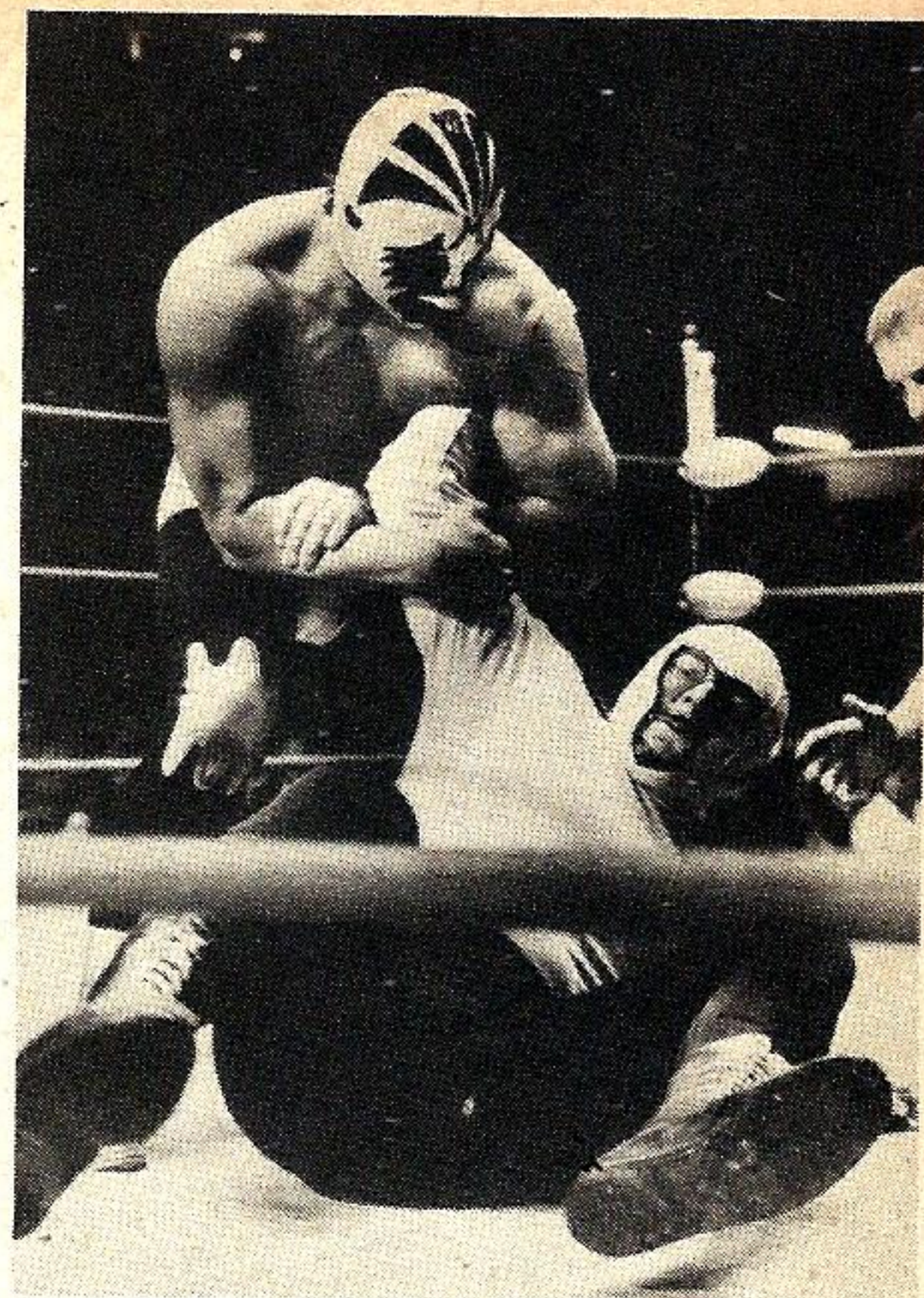
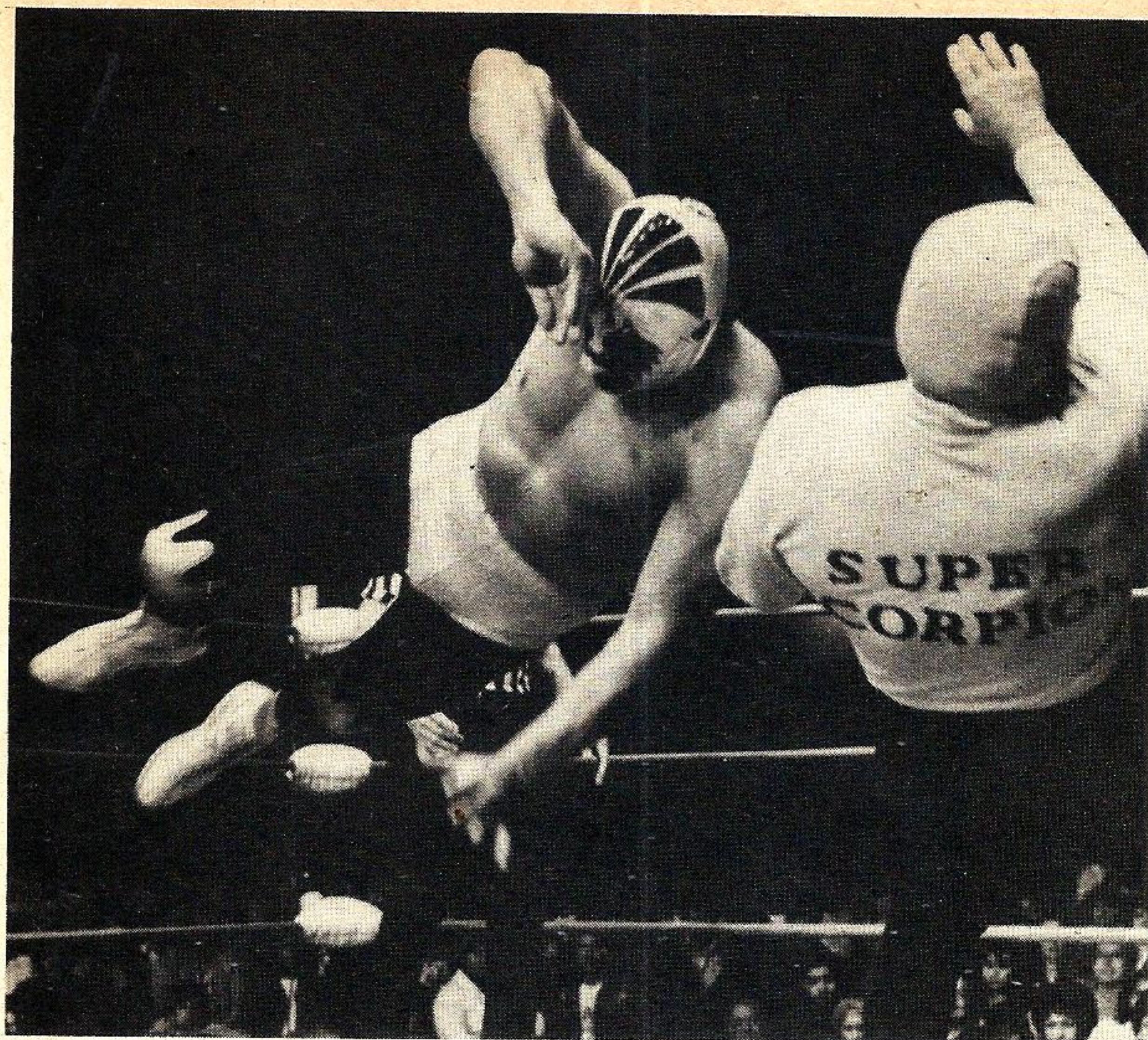
Just after this man dropped out of public view, a new wrestler was beginning to make a sensation in Los Angeles arenas. His name was Mil Mascaras. Though he was quickly earning the adoration of the fans, the young man was still unsure of himself and his place in wrestling.

For a while, Mil considered leaving wrestling. He was having trouble recognizing the sport as his true life's calling. He thought there might be more to life than risking his well-being every time he stepped into a ring. He was not sure if it was worth facing the intense competition inherent in the wrestling community. He liked the cinema and had already made two movies, both of which had been quite successful in his native Mexico.

One night after a match, Mil was visited in his dressing room. It was the former wrestler. "I saw you out there tonight," the man said, "you were very good. Believe me, I know. You were very good."

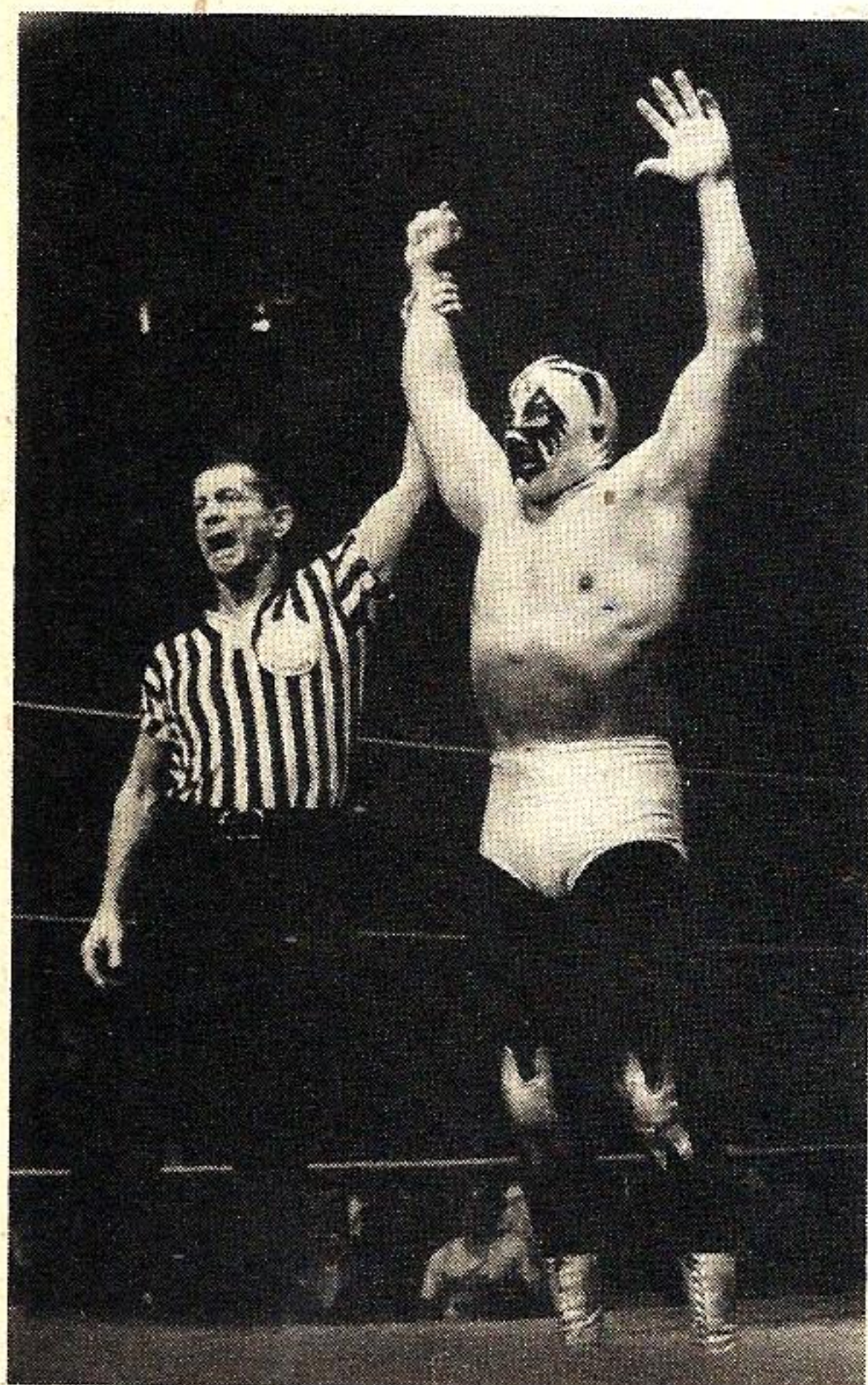
In a few minutes, the two men were engrossed in conversation. Mil felt he could trust this man. After all, here was someone who had experienced the same doubts and anxieties as Mil had. He had handled the problems one way. Maybe he could suggest a way in which Mascaras could work through the same problem, without dropping out of society.

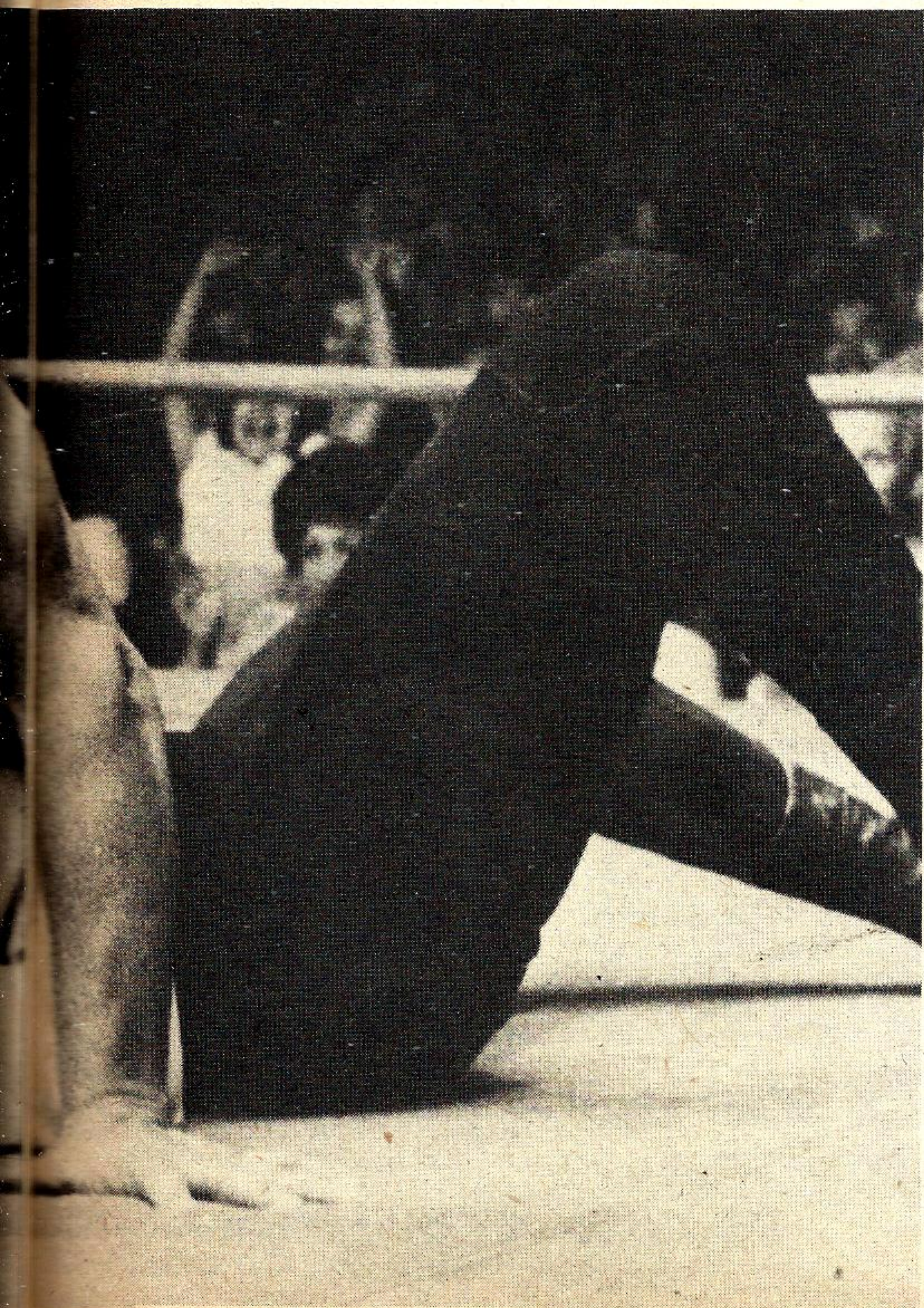
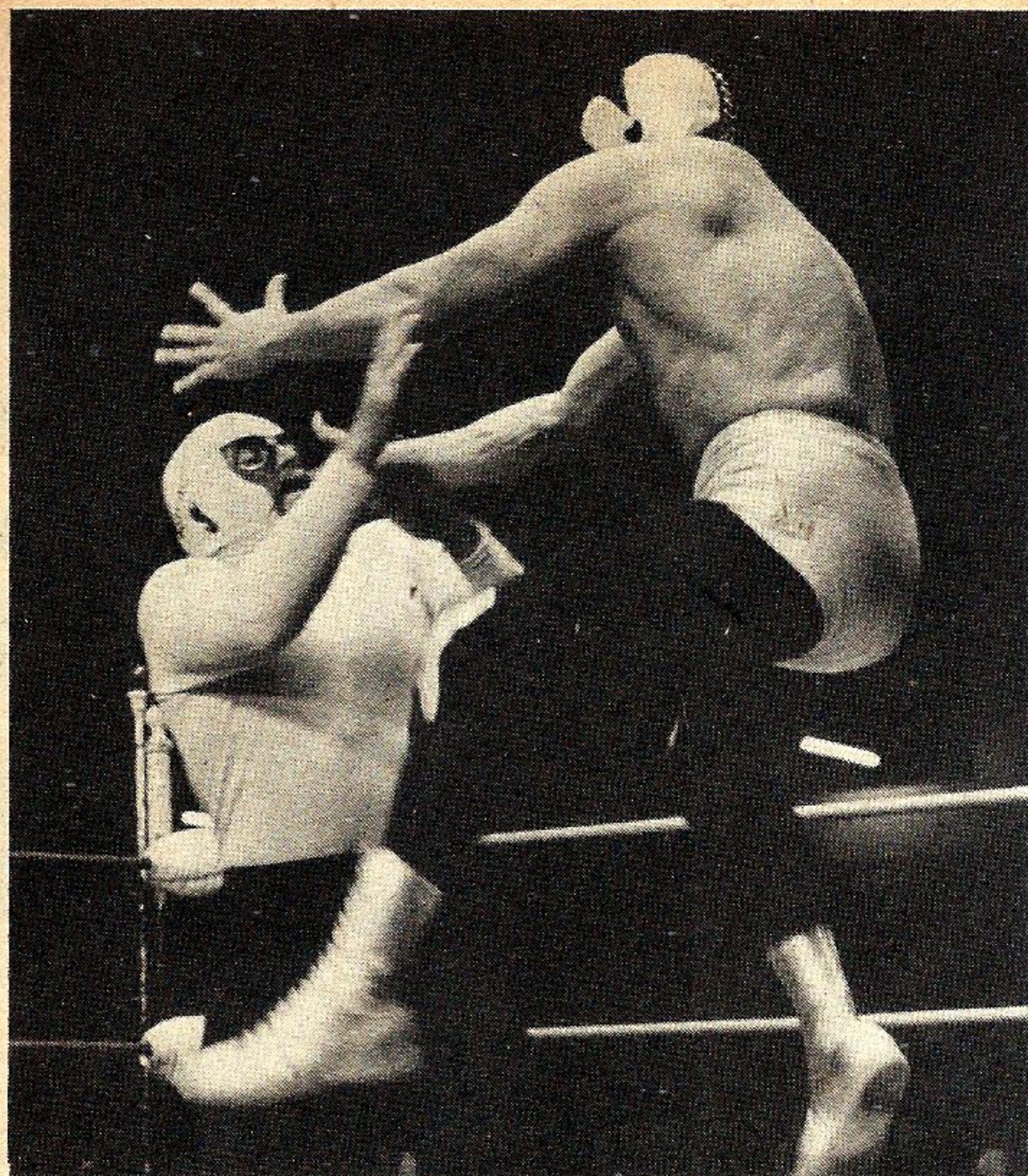
The two men continued their conversation late into the night. At first the former wrestler suggested Mil follow his course of action. But as time went on, it became clear that Mil's dedication to the sport of wrestling did not warrant such drastic measures.



Fearing Mil will take his arm out of its socket, Scorpion tries to reach for the safety of the ropes (above). Mil dazzles his opponent as he flies through the air (right, opposite page).

A perfectly executed front flying bodylock (above) sends Scorpion on his way to the mat. Mil waits for the referee to count to three (right) as Scorpion lies unconscious. The winner, Mil Mascaras—made official by Johnny "Red Shoes" Dugan (below).





At the end of their discussion, Mascaras was filled with new resolve. He could not thank the former wrestler enough for what he had done for the masked man. Mil asked him to come back, but the man never did.

Of course, everyone knows what happened to Mil Mascaras after that. From that one session with the former wrestler, Mil went on to become a world famous wrestler, a successful movie star, and an influential businessman. But even rich and famous people, successful in every endeavor, come to a point in their lives when everything seems as worthless as it did when they were just starting out.

Though he wrestled for several years in Los Angeles, Mil never again had the chance to see the man whose advice had helped catapult him into success. And as he began to wrestle in other part of the country, the memory of the dropout from society began to fade. New influences were beginning to prey on Mil's mind. But there came that day when everything began seeming pointless.

Mil knew he needed to reassess his life. He had pledged to continue wrestling as long as he could. He had made the promise to a dying little girl, and he intended to keep that fateful pledge. The question was how.

The first step Mil took was to disappear for a while. He went into seclusion for secret training sessions with another wrestler. Together they reassessed how they could cope with an ever-changing world. Yet this did not seem to be enough for Mil. He needed more help.

Slowly Mil realized he knew just the person who could help him out of this situation—the former wrestler who had been so instrumental in the early days of his career. Mascaras knew he could have to find that man again. Yet all he knew about the former wrestler's whereabouts was that the man lived somewhere in Los Angeles.

So Mil went back to where he had started his wrestling career. He had to return to his roots.

Thus began Mil's frantic search through hundreds of miles of streets in Los Angeles. He tried to remember where the man lived. He just did not know. So he figured the best place to start would be along Sunset Boulevard. The man had mentioned it once.

What Mil didn't know was that the man had seen him first, walking along that street. Yet the former wrestler could not bring himself to face Mascaras in those surroundings of failure and despair. He needed to present himself in a better environment. It was a matter of pride.

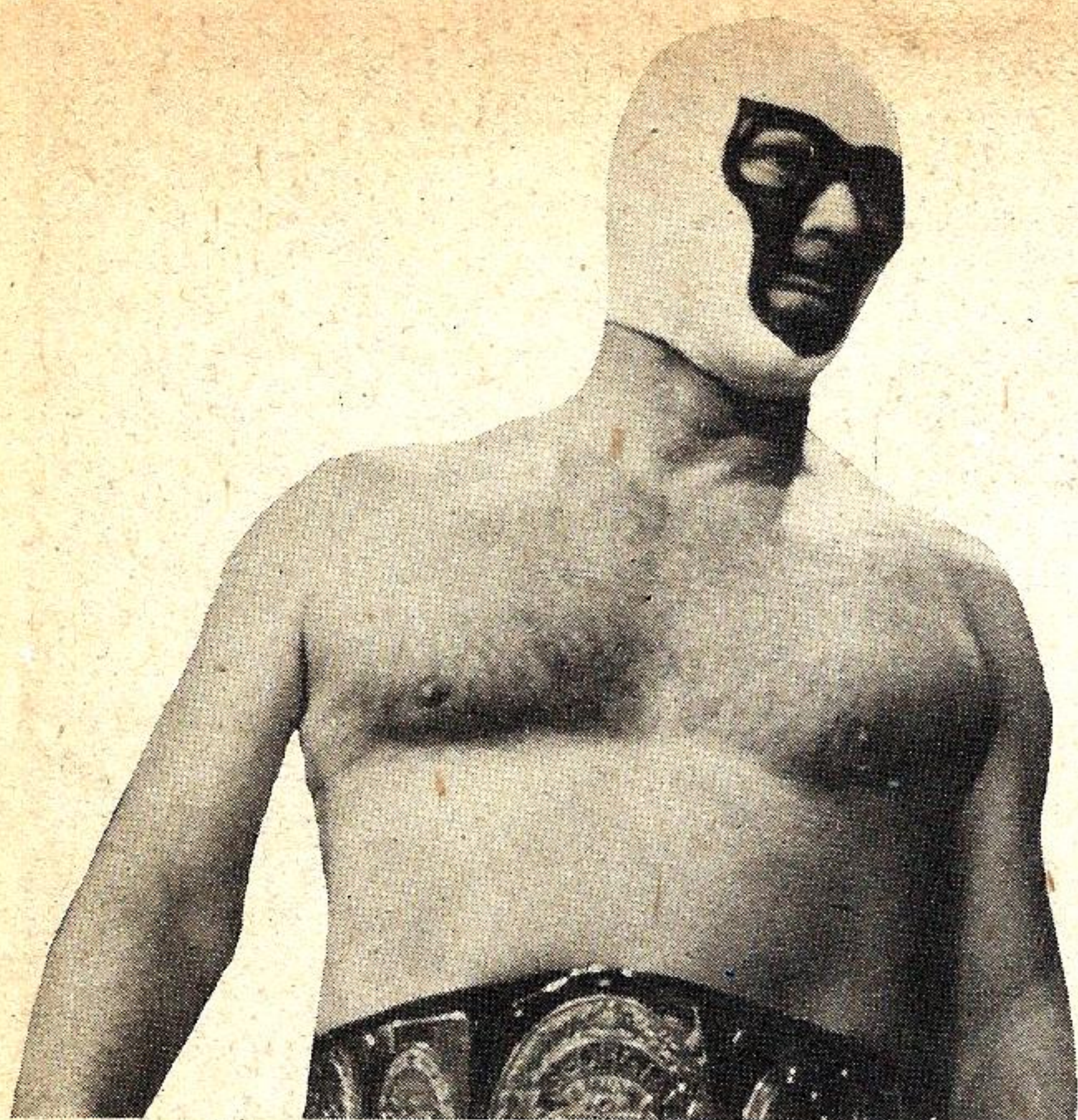
After a few days, Mascaras became frustrated. He hit upon an idea. He decided to wrestle in Los Angeles again, bring some publicity to himself, and hope the former wrestler would pick up on it and visit Mascaras. The plan worked.

When the former wrestler saw advertisements for Mil's return to California wrestling, he knew he had found the place to see the man he had once advised.

After the match, Mil was visited in his dressing room. It was the former wrestler. "I saw you in the audience tonight," Mil said. "I was hoping you would come see me. I need your help again."

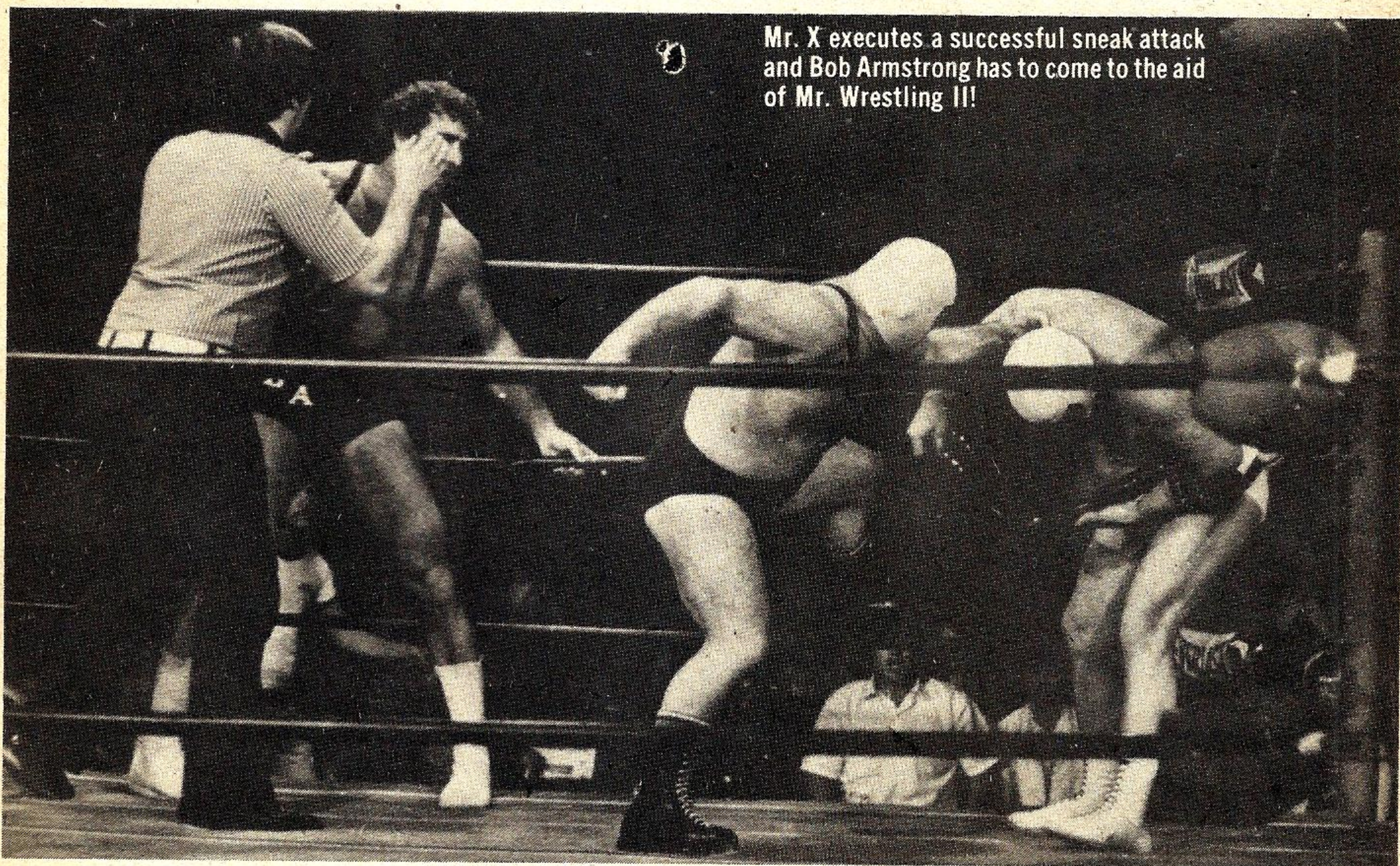
Suddenly the years which had separated their last meeting vanished. The same friendship they had enjoyed before had come back. They talked at length about Mil's problems and how to solve them. And in the end, they did solve them.

But there was one difference between this encounter and the previous one. This time Mil would not lose contact with this man, whose advice and wisdom had been so helpful. This time, Mil would not forget what the man had said. □



WHO IS THE MYSTERIOUS HAUNTING MR. WRESTLING

He wears a mask, follows Mr. Wrestling II around, and has dedicated his life to defeating the popular masked wrestler. Who is Mr. X? If Mr. Wrestling II can't answer this question who can?



Mr. X executes a successful sneak attack and Bob Armstrong has to come to the aid of Mr. Wrestling II!

THE STRANGE CHARACTER, wearing an ominous black trenchcoat, pushes his way through the overflow crowd at the arena. A ski mask covers his face. People stare at him as if he were some creature from outer space. He

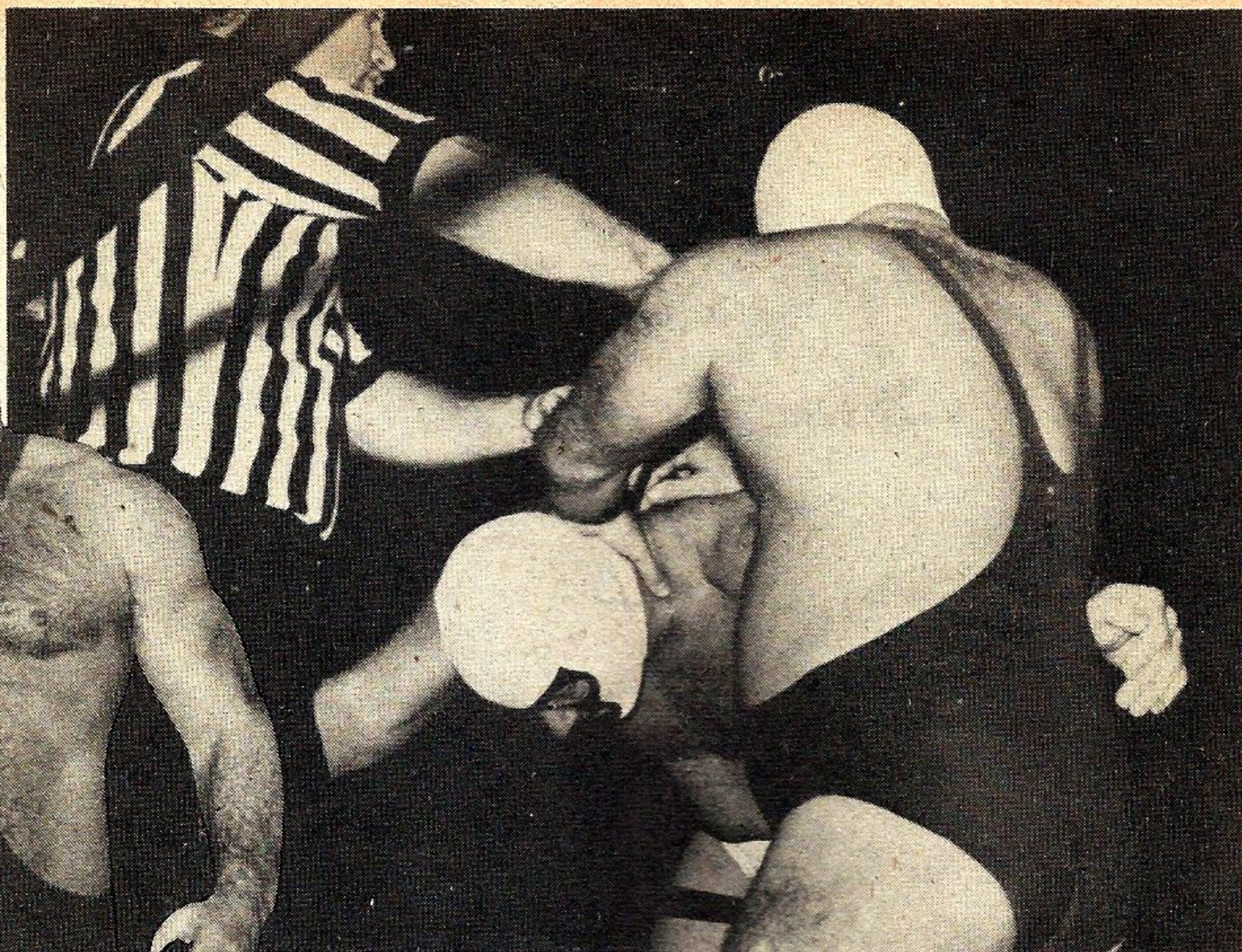
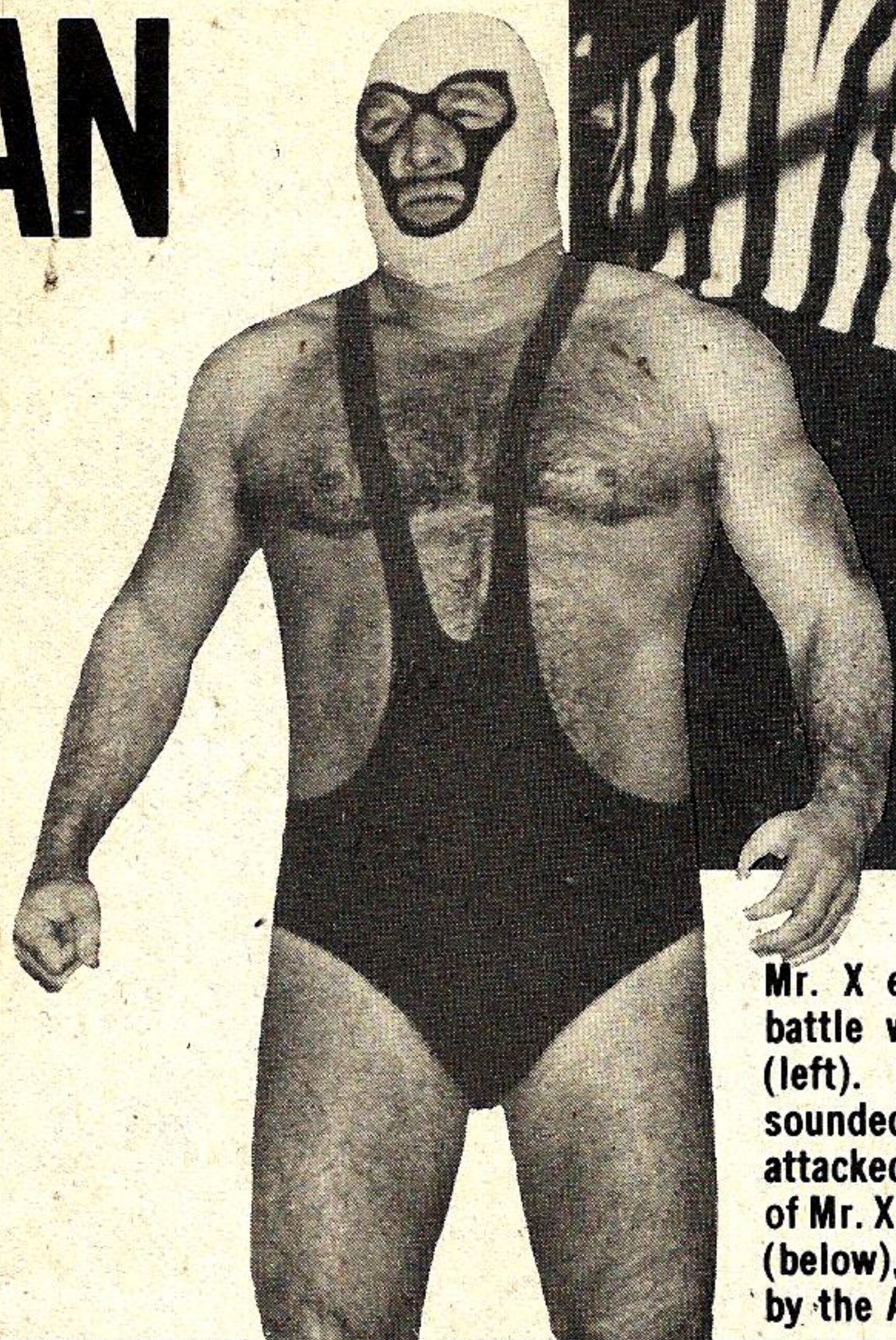
finally arrives at his destination, a ringside seat. Reaching into his pocket, he withdraws a notepad and pen. His attention is riveted on the action taking place in the ring. It is a grueling match between Stan Stasiak and Mr. Wrestling II.

He hastily jots down notes in his pad. No detail goes unnoticed. As soon as the match ends, the mysterious man rises from his seat and quietly slips out of the arena.

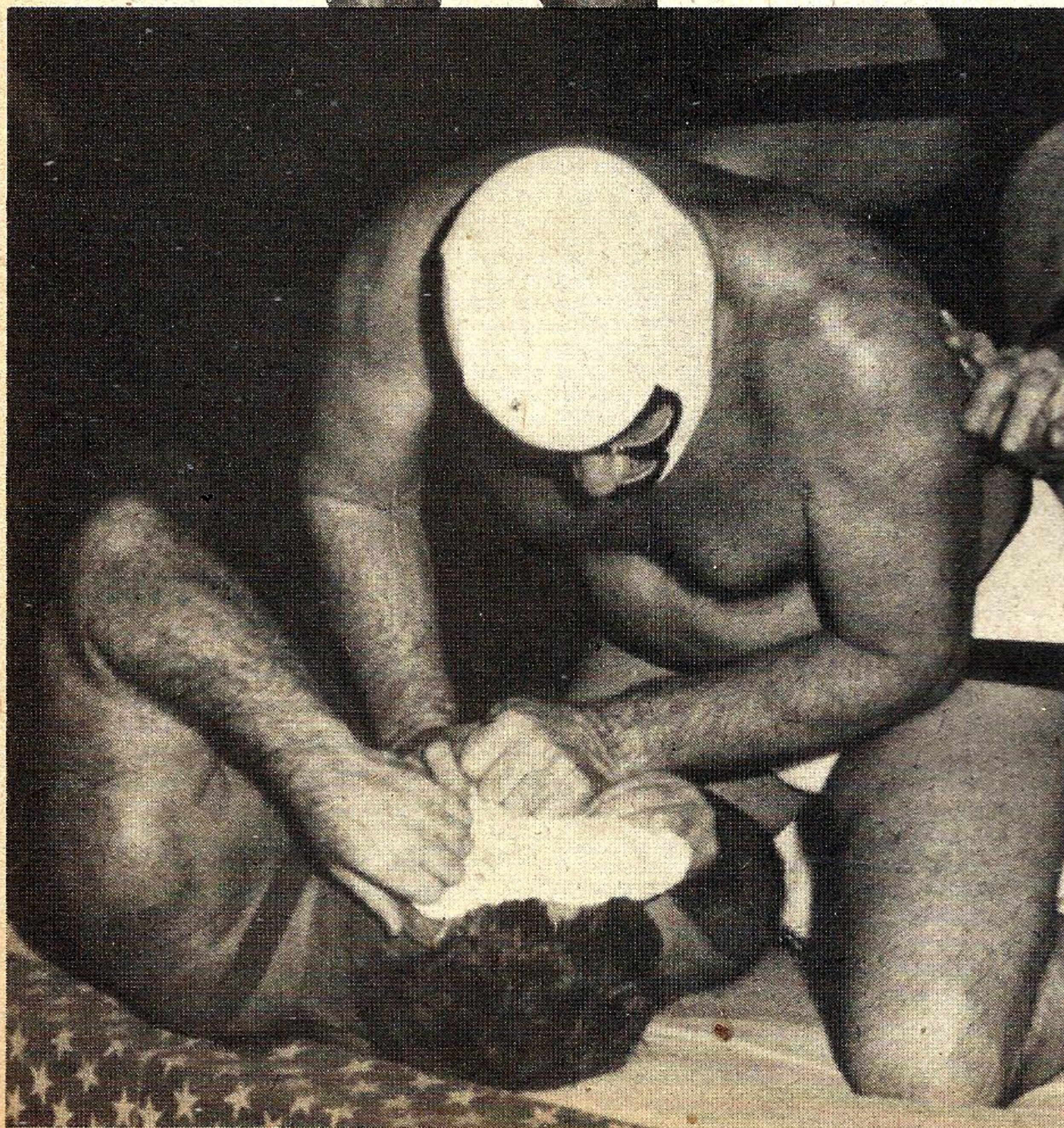
Two days later. Another arena. This time carrying a motion picture

MAN

II?



Mr. X enters the ring to do battle with Mr. Wrestling II (left). Before the bell has sounded, Mr. X has already attacked (above). The identity of Mr. X is about to be revealed (below), but he will be saved by the Anderson Brothers.



camera. And this time Mr. Wrestling II notices the man as he leaves the ring. Wrestling II approaches the strange looking husky man.

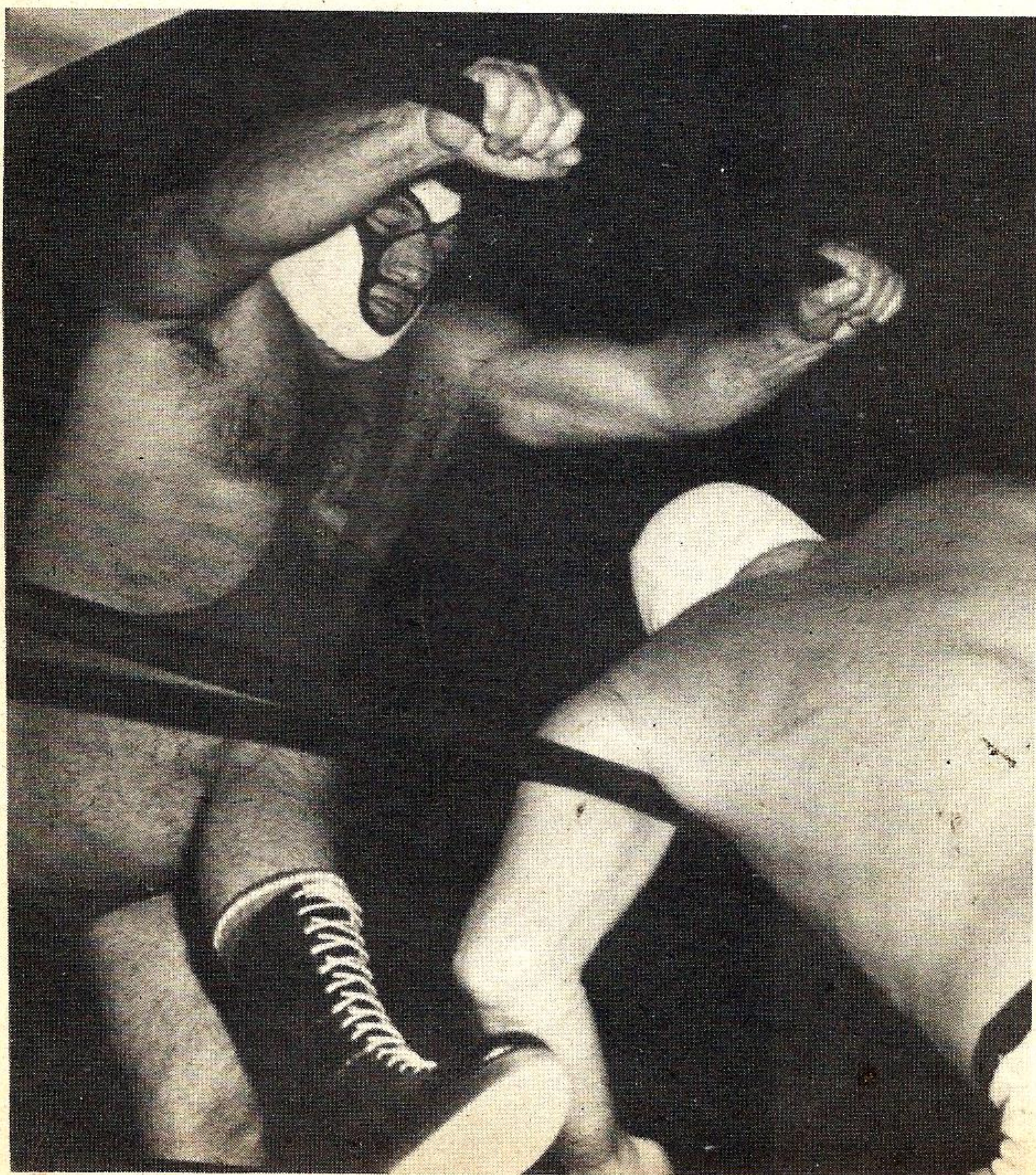
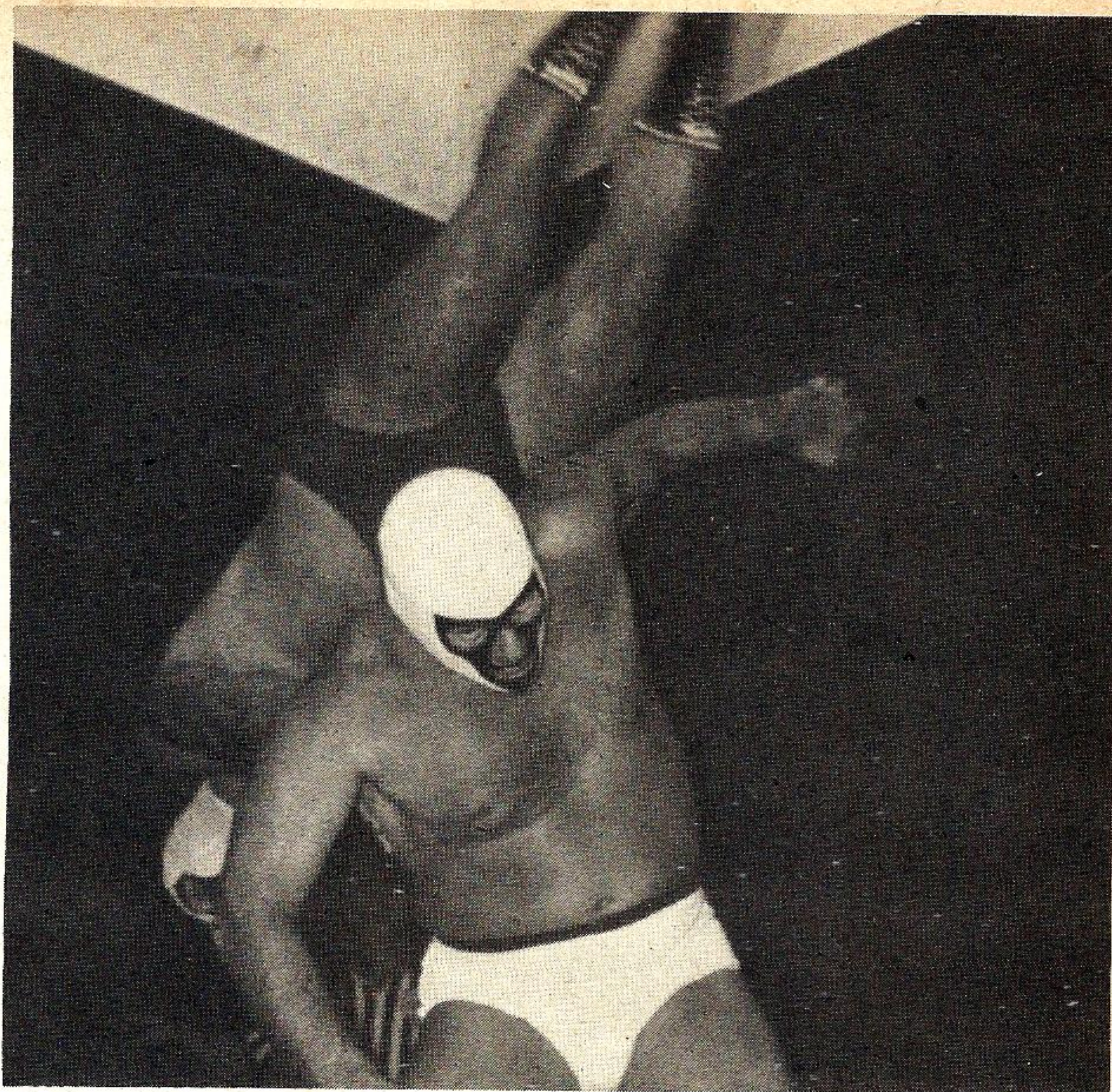
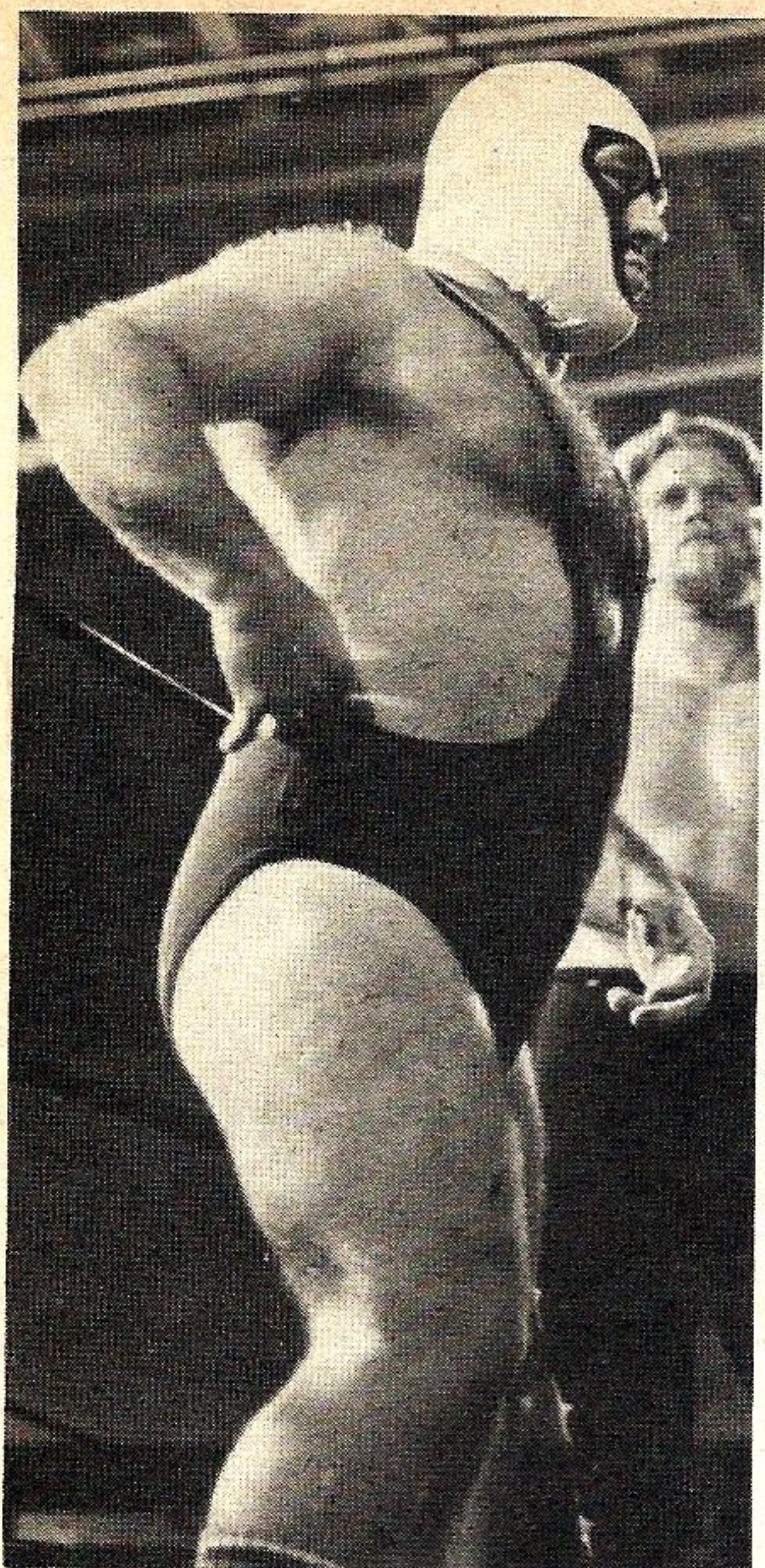
"Why did you film the match?" asks the popular masked grappler. His question falls on deaf ears. The hooded spectator gets out of his seat and quickly leaves the auditorium. Mr. Wrestling II is puzzled. He has no idea what is going on. And it starts to bother him. "Perhaps he is a crackpot fan trying to be noticed," he ponders. It is a possible answer, but not the only one.

The first concrete clue to the hooded man's identity comes to light the following day. The stranger is in the audience again. This time he is wearing a wrestling mask—one similar to Mr. Wrestling II's mask! And there is no trenchcoat. He is in wrestling attire. He films Mr. Wrestling II's match and takes some notes. And then he finally approaches Wrestling II as the masked man is about to head back to the dressing room.

"You stink!" exclaims the raspy voiced stranger. "I will be at the TV wrestling studio tomorrow and I will publicly embarrass you. Be there, you flunkie!"

Mr. Wrestling II just stands there, startled as he watches his new nemesis leave the arena. He is speechless.

As Mr. Wrestling II enters the TV



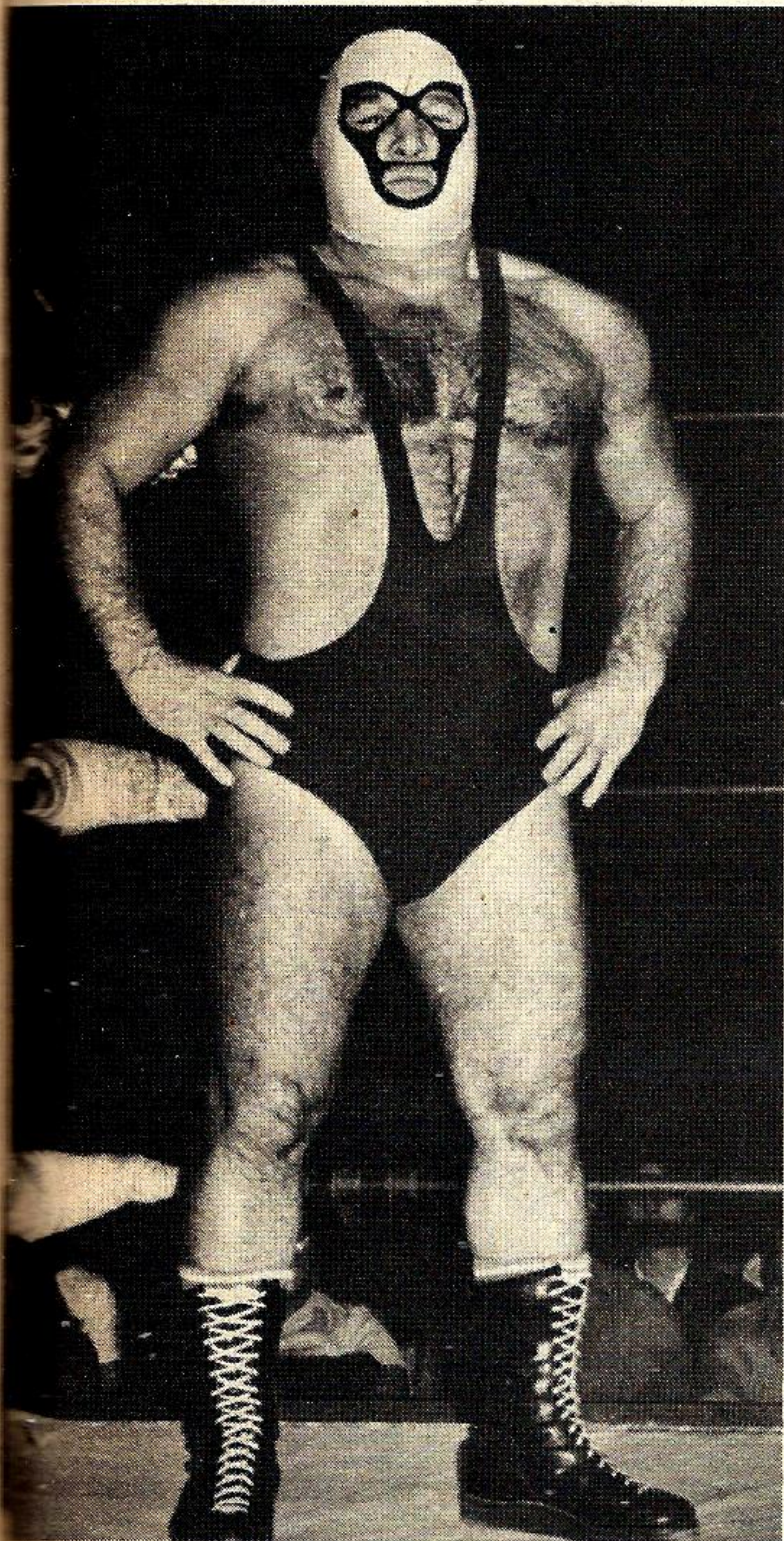
Trying to make Mr. Wrestling II's life unbearable, Mr. X has also donned the exact same mask as Wrestling II (left). A spectacular backdrop (above) sends Mr. X flying! After tossing Wrestling II out of the ring, Mr. X refuses to let him reenter (below).

studio the next day, an interview is in progress. Mr. X had forced the announcer to turn over the microphone to him, threatening to break his neck if he refused. He stares into the camera as thousands of fans listen to his piercing threats. "I will end Wrestling II's career!" he snarls. "This man is an imposter. I will win the right to be called Mr. Wrestling II, an honor that should never have been bestowed on that creep! I have been taking notes and movies of this idiot all of you admire. He doesn't know the first thing about wrestling."

"For the time being, I am to be called Mr. X. When I end that imposter's career, I expect all of you to call me Mr. Wrestling II. And then my next step will be to eliminate Tim Woods and become the only Mr. Wrestling!" With that, he throws the microphone to the floor and storms out of the TV studio. Part of the mystery is now solved for Mr.

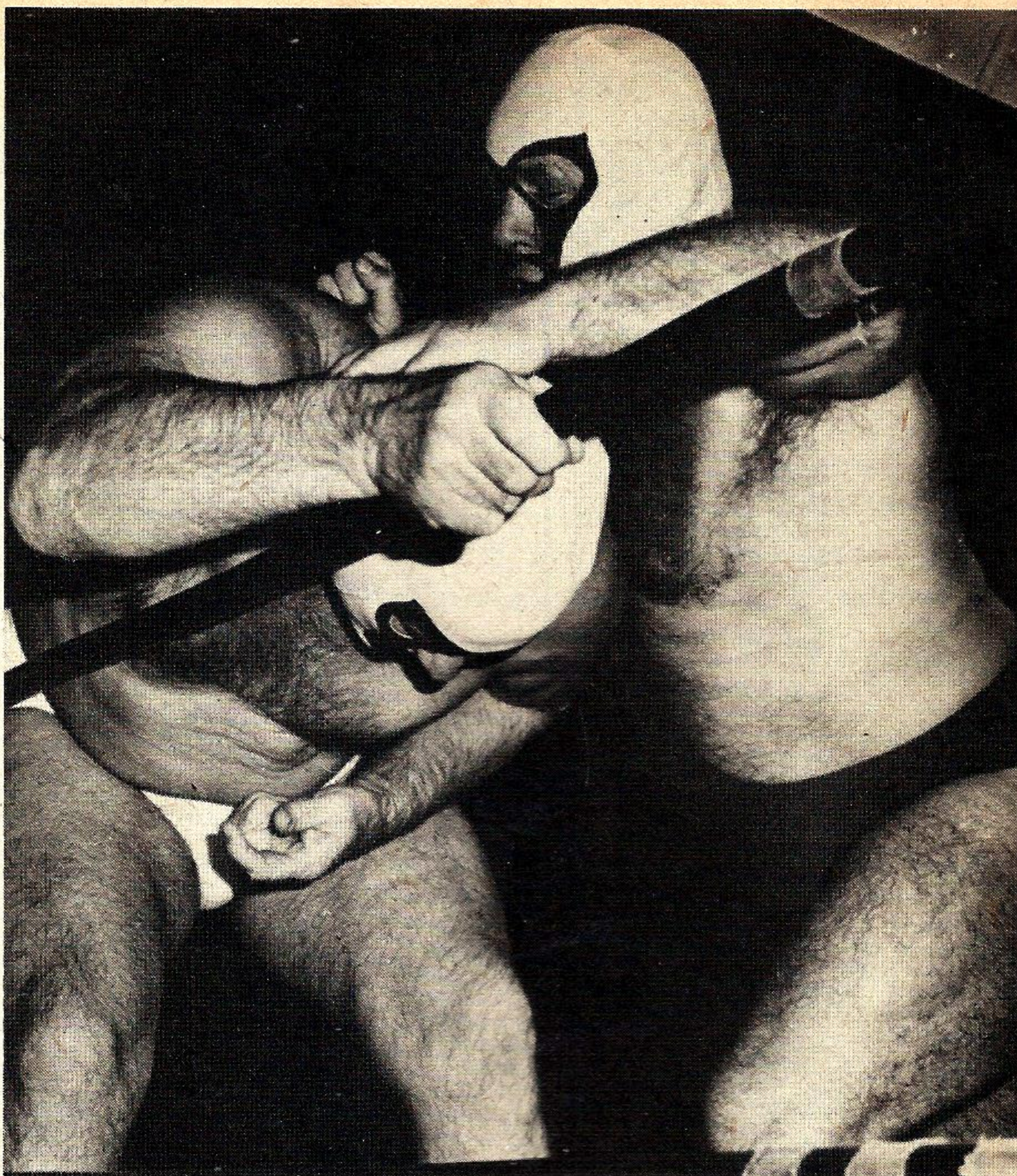
Wrestling II. Now he only has to worry about what the mysterious Mr. X would do next.

Mr. Wrestling II climbs into the ring for a bout the following night. There is no trace of Mr. X at ringside. A quick glance around this



small arena fails to turn up one clue as to where Mr. X might be. Wrestling II's mind was not to be on his match tonight. He is too concerned about the Mr. X situation. And it shows in his wrestling. Wrestling II wins the match, barely. And then the worst happens. As he steps down from the ring, Mr. X grabs his leg and trips him! He has been hiding under the ring. Wrestling II stumbles on the steps, the base of his spine going right into the edge of one of the steps. He cries out in pain. Mr. X is now out in the open, stomping away at the injured masked favorite.

Bob Armstrong and Tim Woods are notified by special security guard Perry Levy and they come to Wrestling II's aid before any more



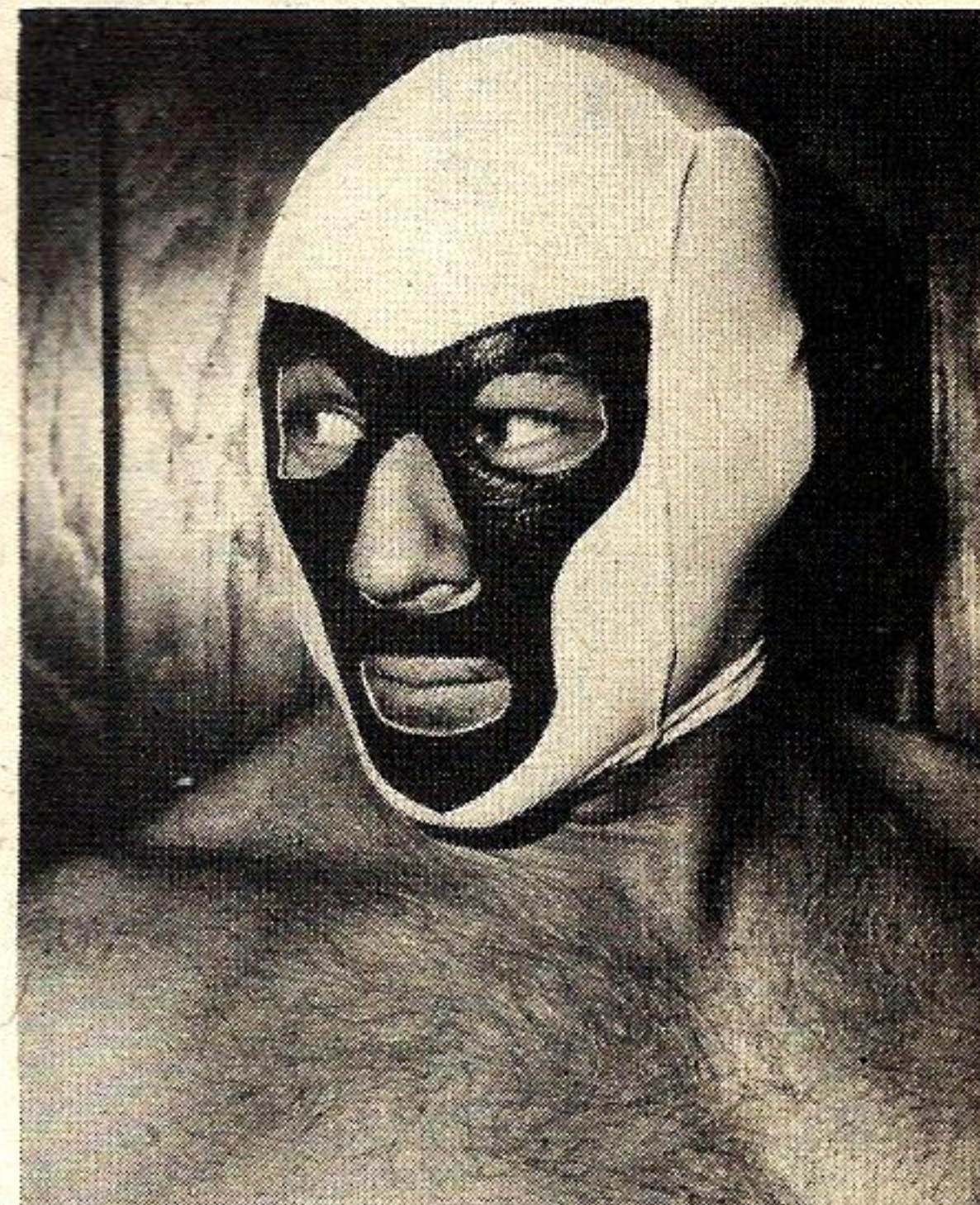
Mr. X (left)—Mr. Wrestling II never knows what the crazed masked man will do next. Mr. X continues his brutal assault (above) even when Wrestling II is clutching the ropes. Wrestling II (right) still has no sure fire plan for dealing with Mr. X.

damage can be done. They make Mr. X run for the hills. Wrestling II is carried back to the dressing room by Woods and Armstrong. His injuries are minimal. He recovers several minutes later.

"Damn it!" explodes Wrestling II, almost smashing his fist through a metal locker, "he could have crippled me tonight. I've had it with that degenerate. I want him in a death match. And I want it soon!"

The match was a natural, promoters signed it for the following week. Hours and hours of vicious technique study went into Wrestling II's training schedule. He would not let anything stop him against Mr. X. He wanted the man out of his life—for good!

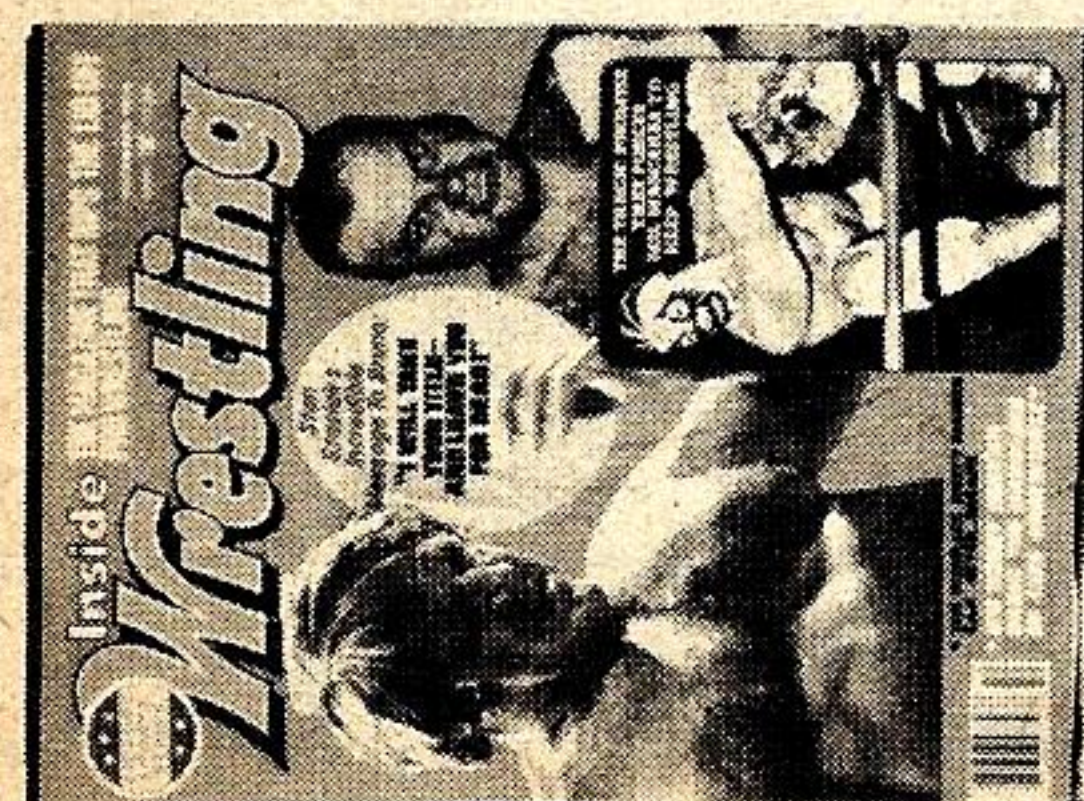
The match became just as



frustrating for Mr. Wrestling II as the past events. Mr. X ran from II and very little wrestling took place. Mr. X was eventually counted out of the ring. Mr. Wrestling II was disgusted, and rightfully so.

When will it end? Probably with one man crippling the other. It should not be that way with professional athletes. But it may have to end that way. □

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YOUR LETTERS

(Continued from Page 18)



Wahoo McDaniel proves over and over again that he is indeed one of the bravest men ever to have entered pro wrestling. Even when it looks like Wahoo is down and out, he comes back and wins. That is something few wrestlers have the capacity to do!

IS SOMETHING WRONG?

I know there must be something wrong in my thinking, but I found myself upset with the outcome of the story "Doubleteamed, Bloody, and Battered . . . But Wahoo Wins the Match!" (THE WRESTLER/January 1977).

I really like Wahoo McDaniel, but I like Ric Flair even more. As far as I'm concerned, Flair is definitely the more colorful, interesting wrestler of the two

men. I know he resorts to illegal tactics, and has been responsible for serious injuries to many men. But Wahoo, who tries to stay strictly within the rules, does not excite me. He may be an excellent wrestler, but I really am not interested in his successes, especially over men like Ric Flair.

MARK MacPHERSON
Laurel, Md.

(Continued on page 48)

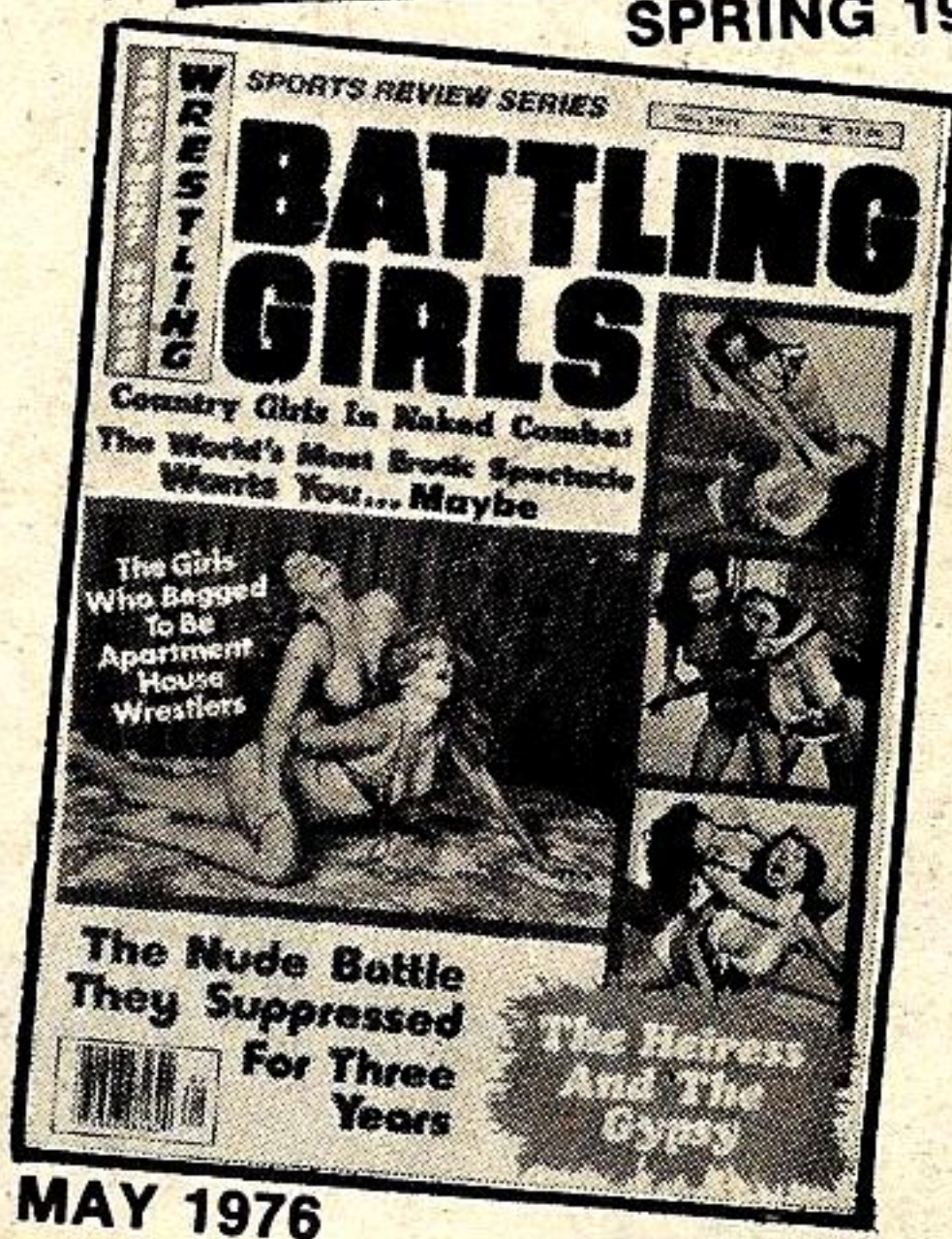
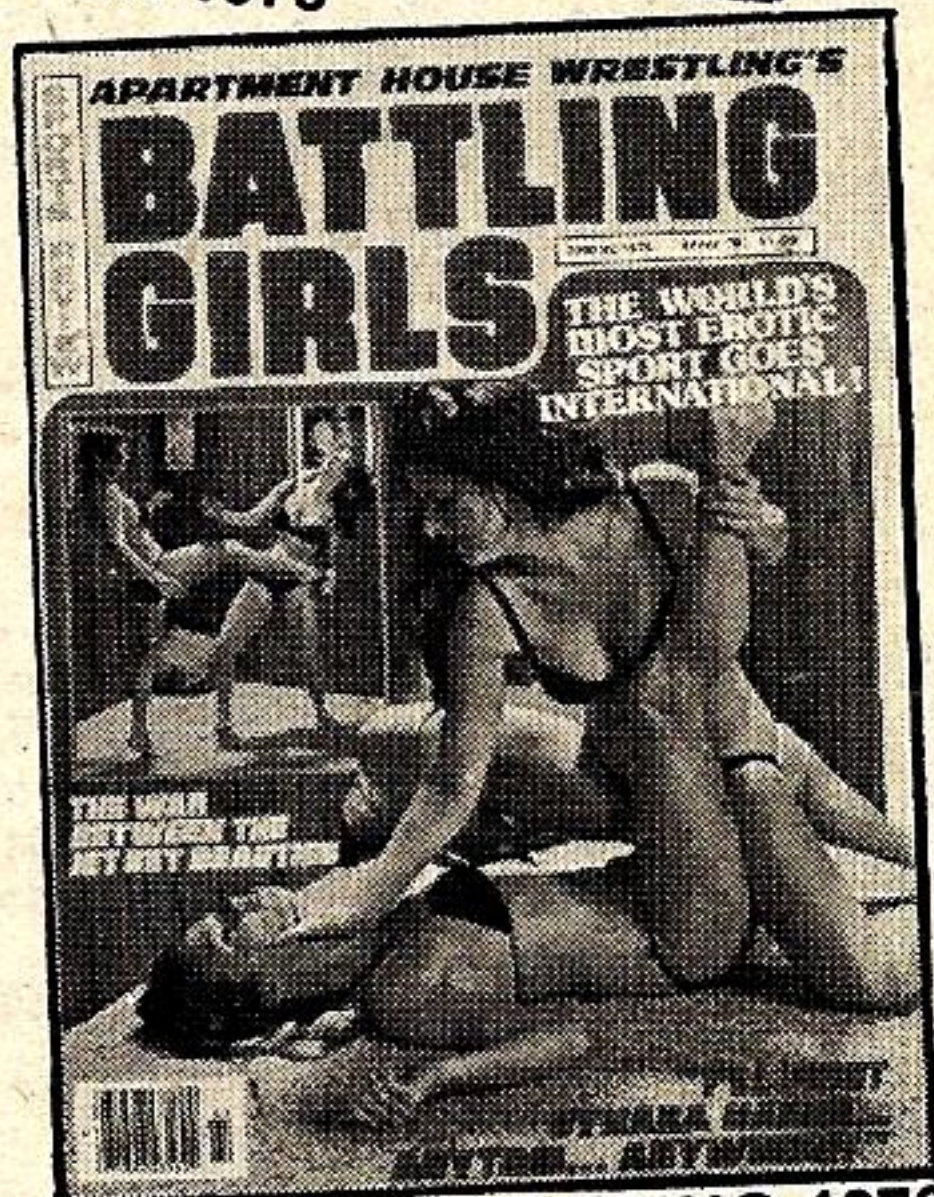
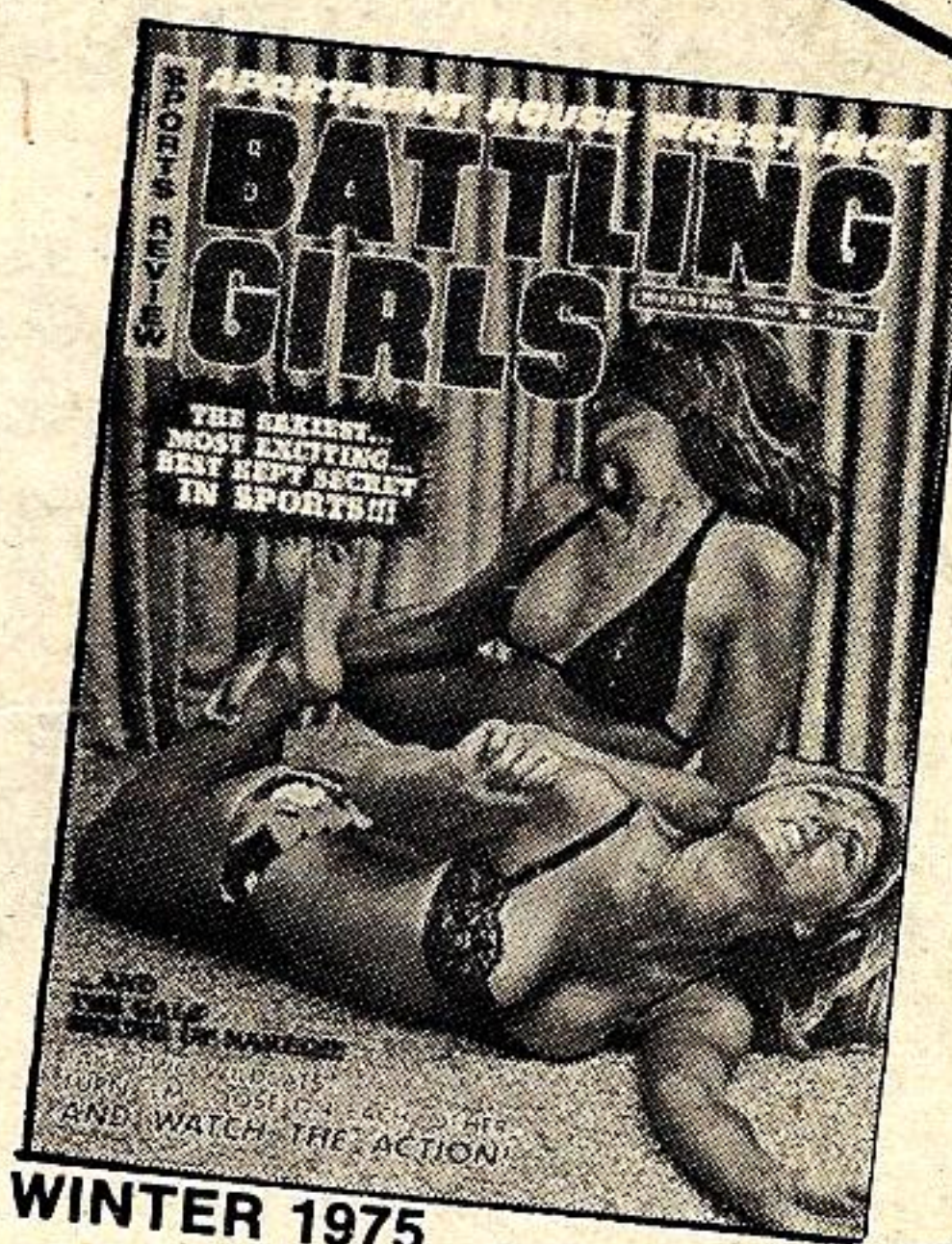
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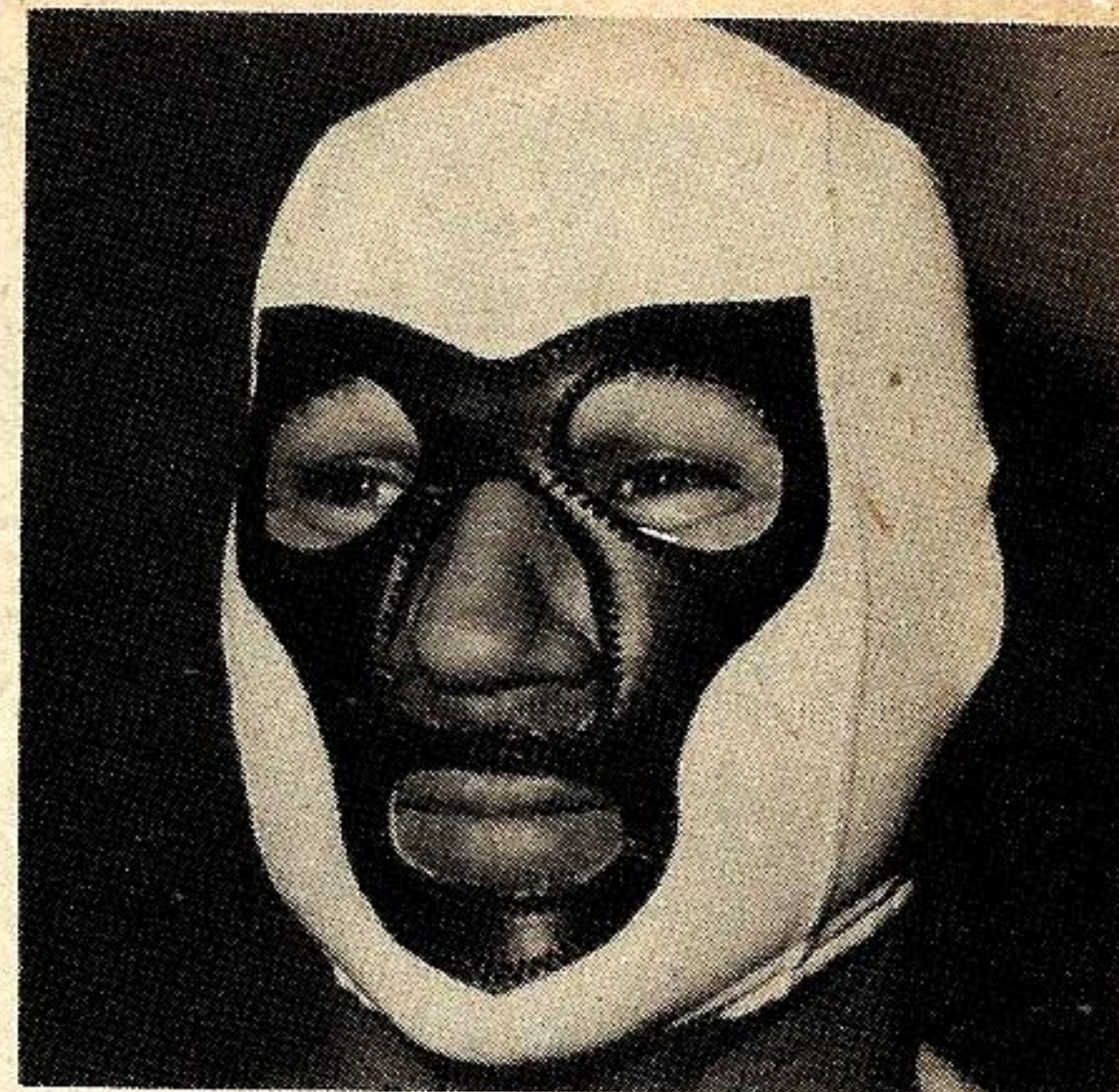
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YOUR LETTERS

(Continued from Page 46)



Mr. Wrestling II made a lot of people happy when he ran Stan Stasiak out of the State of Georgia.

IT'S ABOUT TIME

It is about time someone did it. I am referring to Mr. Wrestling II's claim, "I ran Stasiak Out of Town!" (January 1977). I, for one, am quite glad to see this turn of events.

I remember how much grief Stasiak had given Mr. Wrestling II. I distinctly remember that whole incident with Stan blackmailing the masked man into quitting wrestling. After all that, it is no wonder Wrestling II was so angry at Stasiak.

With a little bit of luck, we may never see Stan Stasiak in this part of the country again.

WALTER GILLETTE
Winston-Salem, N.C.

A TOUCHING STORY

I have just finished reading your story, "A Matter of Honor" (January 1977), and I felt I had to comment on it.

Bob Roop should be banned from the sport! How dare he make such vicious remarks about a man who put his life on the line for his country. Steve Keirn has a right to be proud of his father, and his father equally is justified in being proud of Steve. That much seems clear.

Then along comes this insensitive lout who says Steve's father is a coward because he spent five years as a prisoner in Vietnam, and that Steve is just as much a coward. Who does Bob Roop think he is? Where does he get off with being allowed to make such absurd accusations.

I, for one, am glad Steve Keirn taught Roop a lesson. He is very lucky Steve didn't kill him.

ARTEMUS WAGNER
Joplin, Mo. ☐

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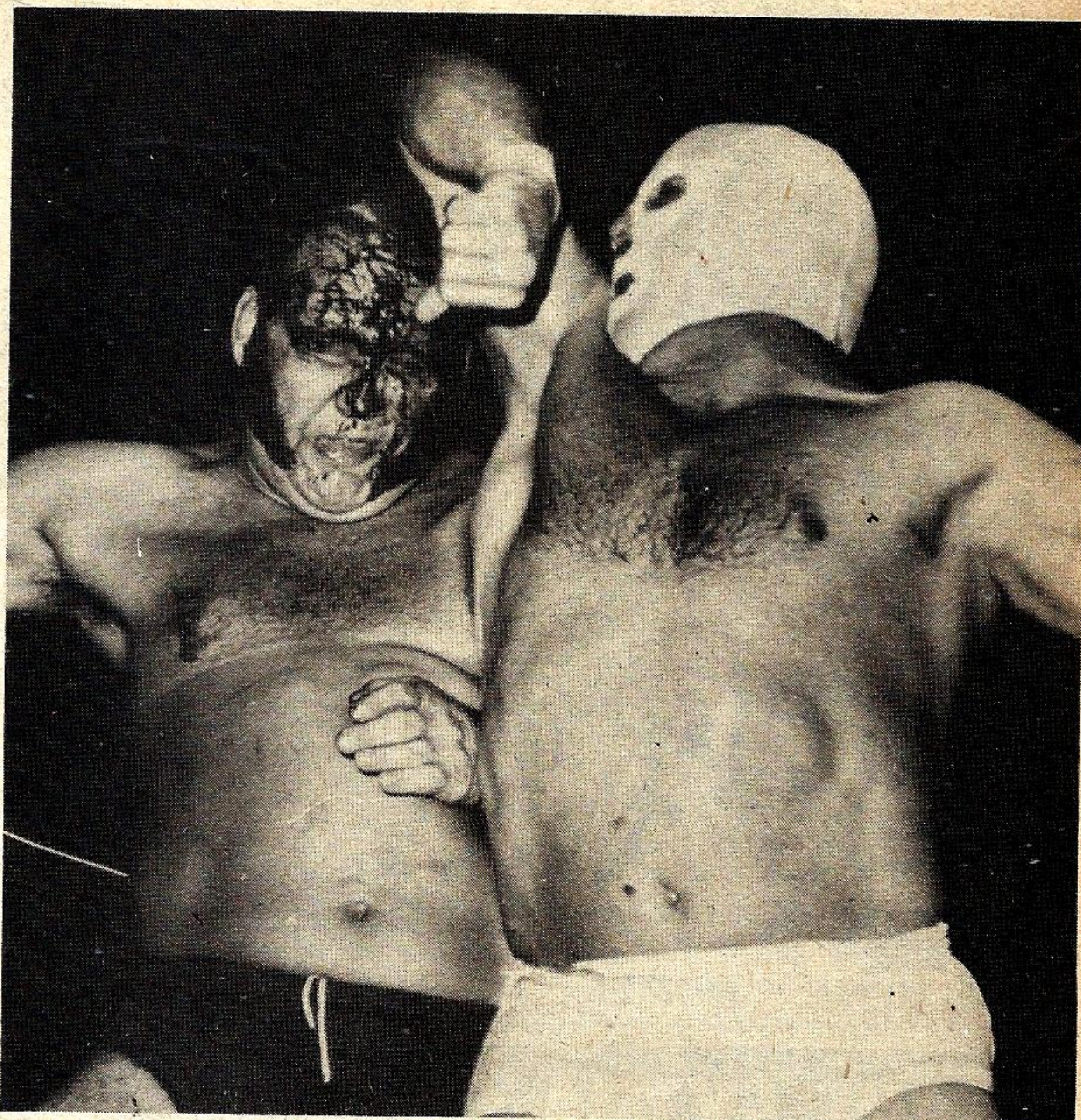
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THE ANDERSONS

(Continued from Page 22)



Mr. Wrestling I repeatedly smashes his elbow in Gene Anderson's forehead and continues to draw blood. Although Gene looks like he's had about all he can take, he will rally and take the win for his team. "Nothing can stop us from winning!" brags Ole and Gene.

corner, an entire ring away from his partner. Exhausted, the man is helpless to defend himself. And the Andersons gain another victory.

One would assume if their strategy is so obvious, any intelligent grappler wouldn't fall prey to their cunning. That's underestimating the brilliant subtlety of the Andersons attack. It can best be described by one of its victims, Tim Woods.

"I knew what to expect," Tim avers, "and was still fooled. Up until the moment they turned, I really believed I had them. You don't realize what's happening until it's too late. At first, you're knocking down one of them. You expect the other to come to his aid. He falls, also.

"Now blood is pumping behind your eyes. The scent of victory fills your nostrils. Whatever you try appears to be working. You become the captive of your own ego, actually believing these two men are crumpling like dry leaves.

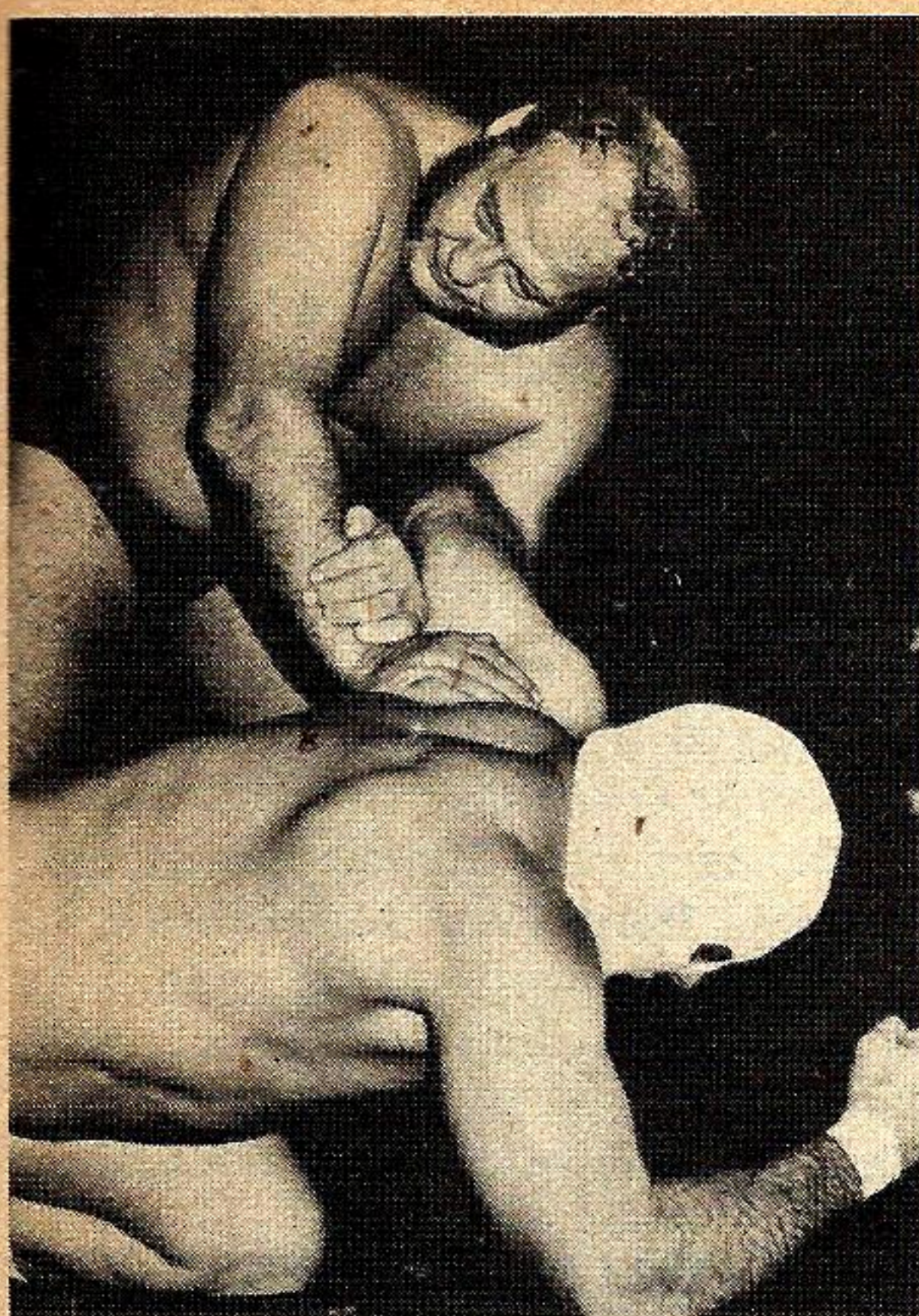
Then, when they've got you caught in their corner, when there's no way to escape, they turn from victims to attackers.

"That's when you find out how tired you've become, how far from your partner you stand, how hopeless the situation is. And that's when you lose.

"Later, you might take some satisfaction in having hurt them, somewhat. Perhaps you get some joy out of having bloodied them. But you know you've lost. And there's only anguish in that."

Woods also has a theory as to why the Andersons have made the \$100,000 prize for beating them.

"It's a psyche move," Woods believes, "nothing more, nothing less. They have no intention of paying the money. They probably don't even have it. It's just a 100 grand insult to their opponents, putting us down before the match begins. They want the crowd to think the Andersons are



Gene Anderson puts a painful armlock on Mr. Wrestling I (above). The Andersons have been totally ruthless and cunning in their efforts to keep their money.

indisputably above all their foes. When they do get defeated—and it will be soon—the \$100,000 promise will become the \$100,000 lie. You can bank on that!

“The Andersons are concerned with attracting new opponents. They know no one believes they’ll come through on their offer. It’s for the fans and no one else. Except, it may be for themselves a bit, also. When your confidence is shaky, bragging is a good way to bolster it. And \$100,000 is a hell of a bolster!”

The Andersons have heard the doubts of wrestlers all over the NWA. Gene laughs at the accusations. Ole gets angry.

“How dare they question the word of an Anderson!” he screams, proving he worries about people doubting his word a great deal. “Didn’t we promise? I can’t believe people would state it’s a trick. The Andersons have never done anything tricky in our entire careers. We’re models of honesty.

“You have to expect the dummies we wrestle to pretend they’re really competitors. You can’t expect them to admit we need the money to attract decent tag teams. Losers will always make excuses. These guys are losers. As far as they’re concerned, we might just as well be lying about the 100 grand. Hell, they’ll never be good enough to collect.”

Eventually, a tag team will be good enough to win the offering. They’d be wise not to spend the money before they collect it. □

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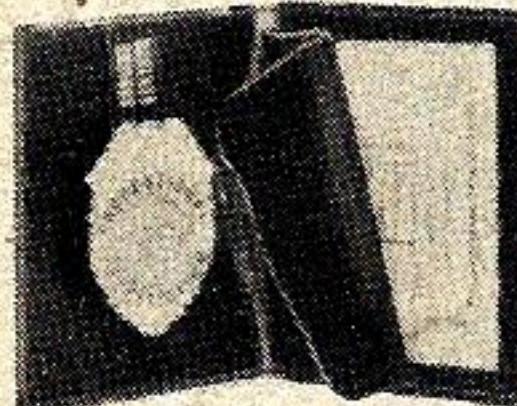
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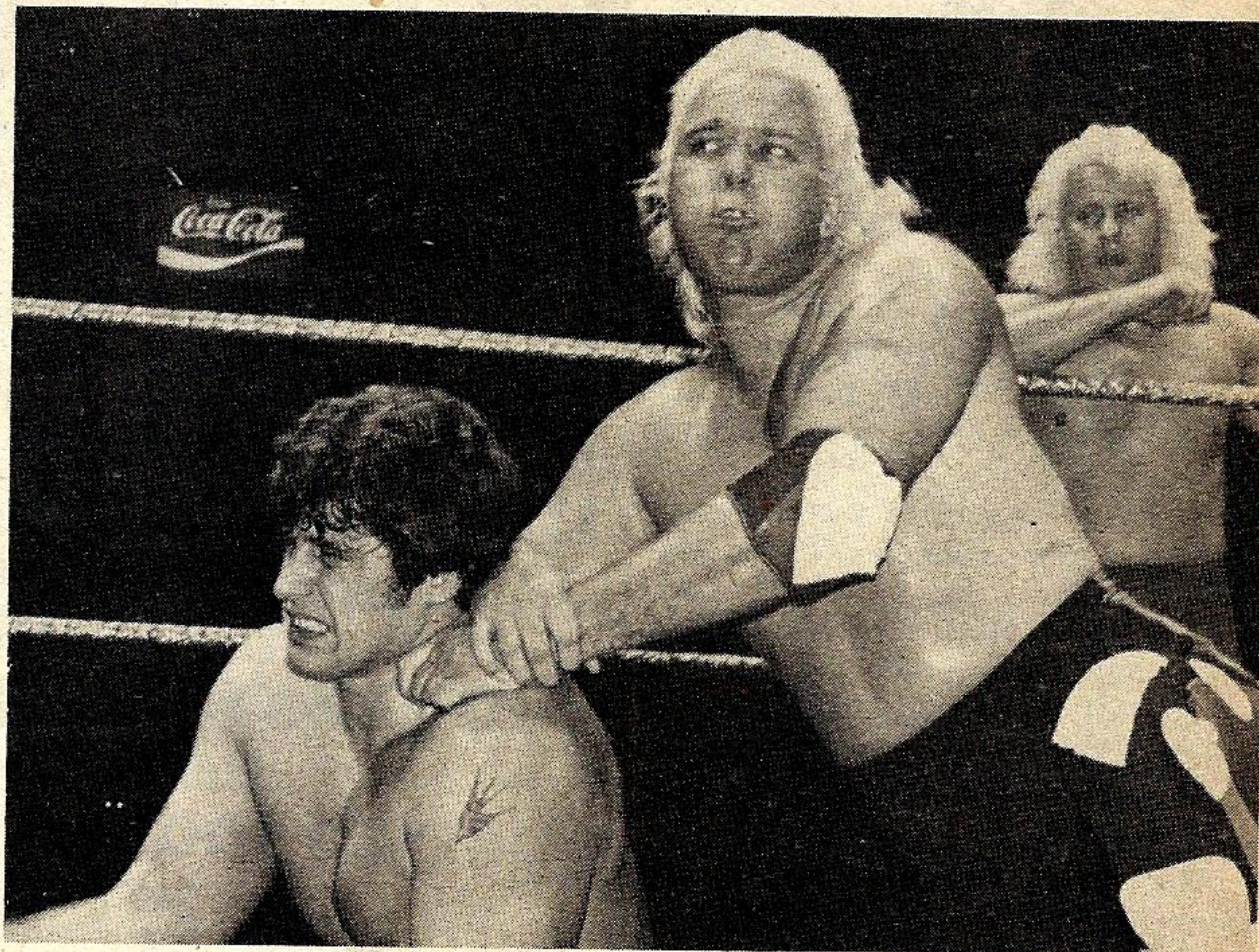
HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING, BABY

(Continued from Page 8)

Mascaras fans. The masked wrestler has returned to California after an absence on that scene for several years. For more details as to why, turn to page 38 . . . The WWF tournament to determine the new tag team champions has been completed. Chief Jay Strongbow and Billy White Wolf are the new owners of the belts. They defeated Tor Kamata and Nikolai Volkoff for the honors . . . The feud between Bob Backlund and Jack Brisco has taken a turn for the worse, and no one is certain how it will end. It's really a pity these two fine wrestlers cannot get along with each other. They

match . . . After taking a long-standing position against them, the commissions are considering allowing Battle Royals in New York City's Madison Square Garden. A decision on this matter is expected shortly . . . Tokyo fans recently thrilled to a battle between the teams of Inoki and Sakaguchi against Ivan Koloff and Superstar Graham.

Manager Fred Blassie has decided to bring Baron Von Raschke into the WWF territory. "This man is a brilliant wrestling tactician," says Fred. "He will easily win Sammartino's title. And when he does



Handsome Jim Valiant applies pressure to an excruciatingly painful nervehold as Tony Garea grimaces in pain. Brother John watches Jim from afar. The Valiants recently captured a version of the NWA tag team title!

have complimentary styles and could become an excellent tag team.

In one of the most dramatic comebacks of the year, the Valiant Brothers have won the NWA tag team title! It seems after reading reports of how they were all washed up, the Brothers found the motivation to go for championship. They have proven they were still on top.

Jack Brisco has started his long journey back to a world championship. He recently won the Missouri State title. This may be just the beginning . . . Nick Bockwinkel has managed to keep his tenuous hold on the AWA title. Chief Peter Maivia's attempt to wrest the crown from Nick's head was halted in a very exciting

that, we will let anyone who has enough guts to face Von Raschke for the title have the chance. We will not allow only a few select people to have title shots like Bruno does now."

Ernie Ladd has returned to the United States after a successful tour of Australia and Japan. He has set his sights on winning Bobo Brazil's U.S. title . . . Dory Funk Jr. is clean-shaven again. After hearing thousands of complaints about his beard, it seemed about time for Dory to do the right thing. "I just got up one morning," says Dory, "looked in the mirror, and decided to get rid of the damn thing!"

And that's what's happening, baby! □

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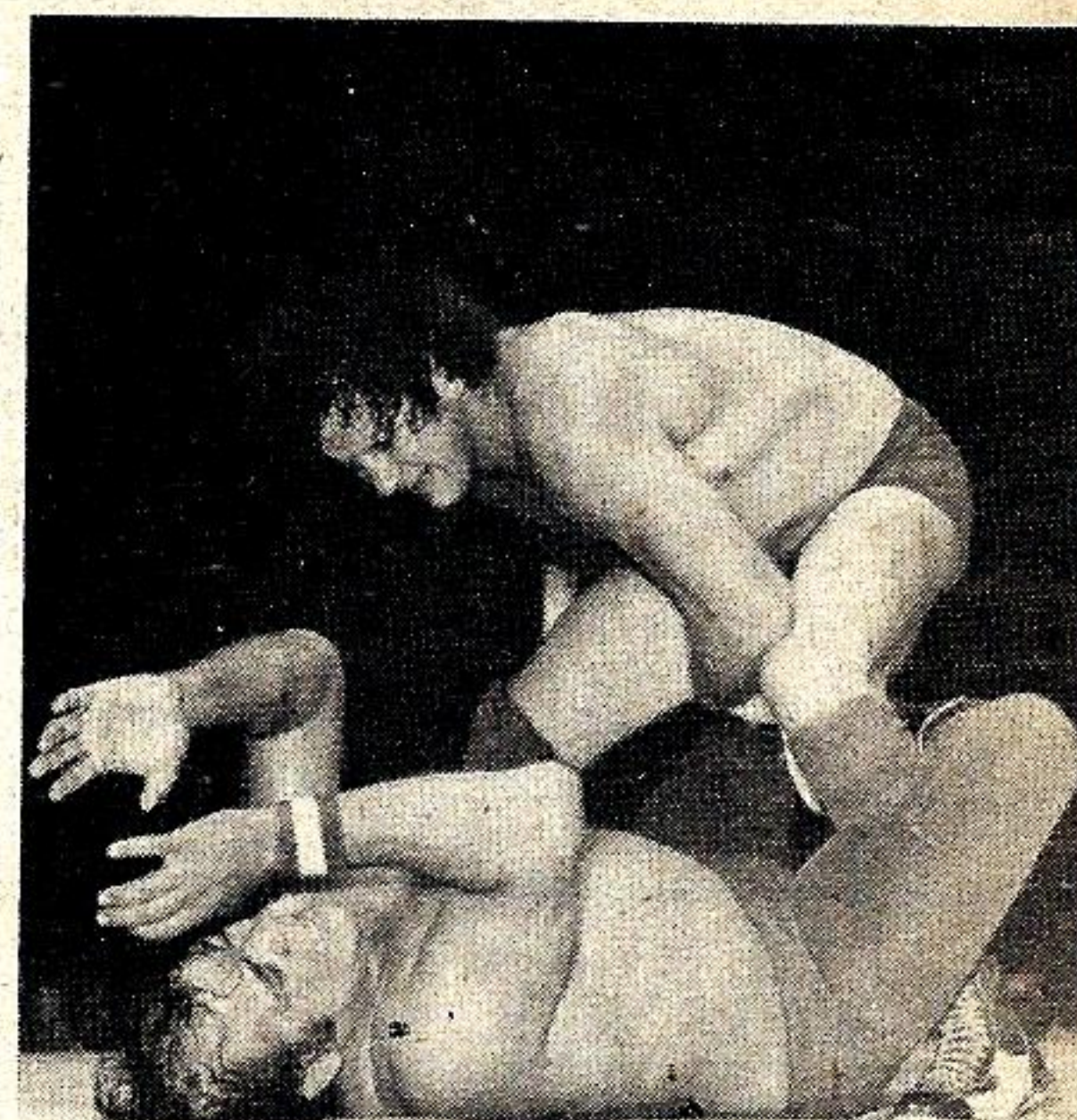
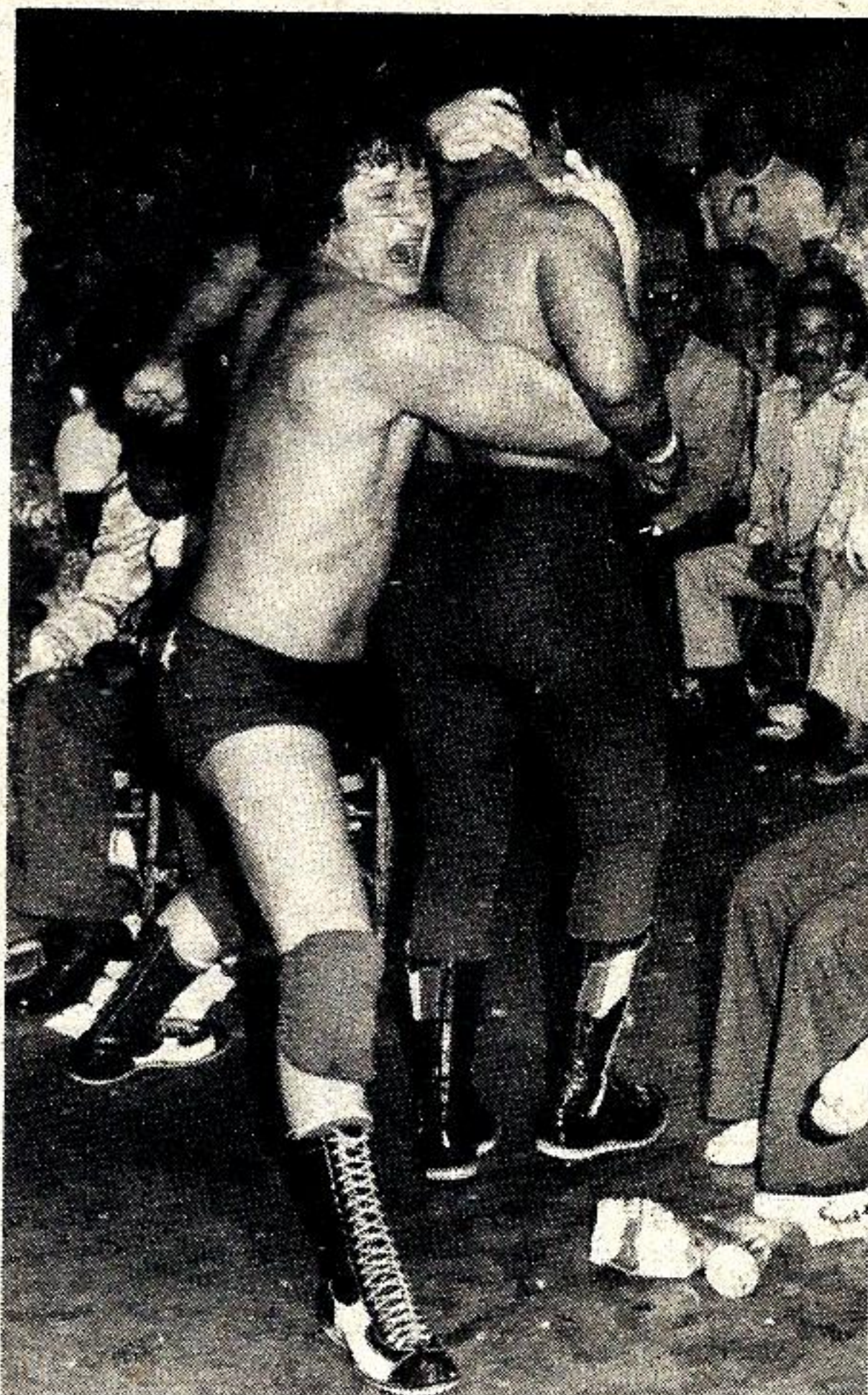
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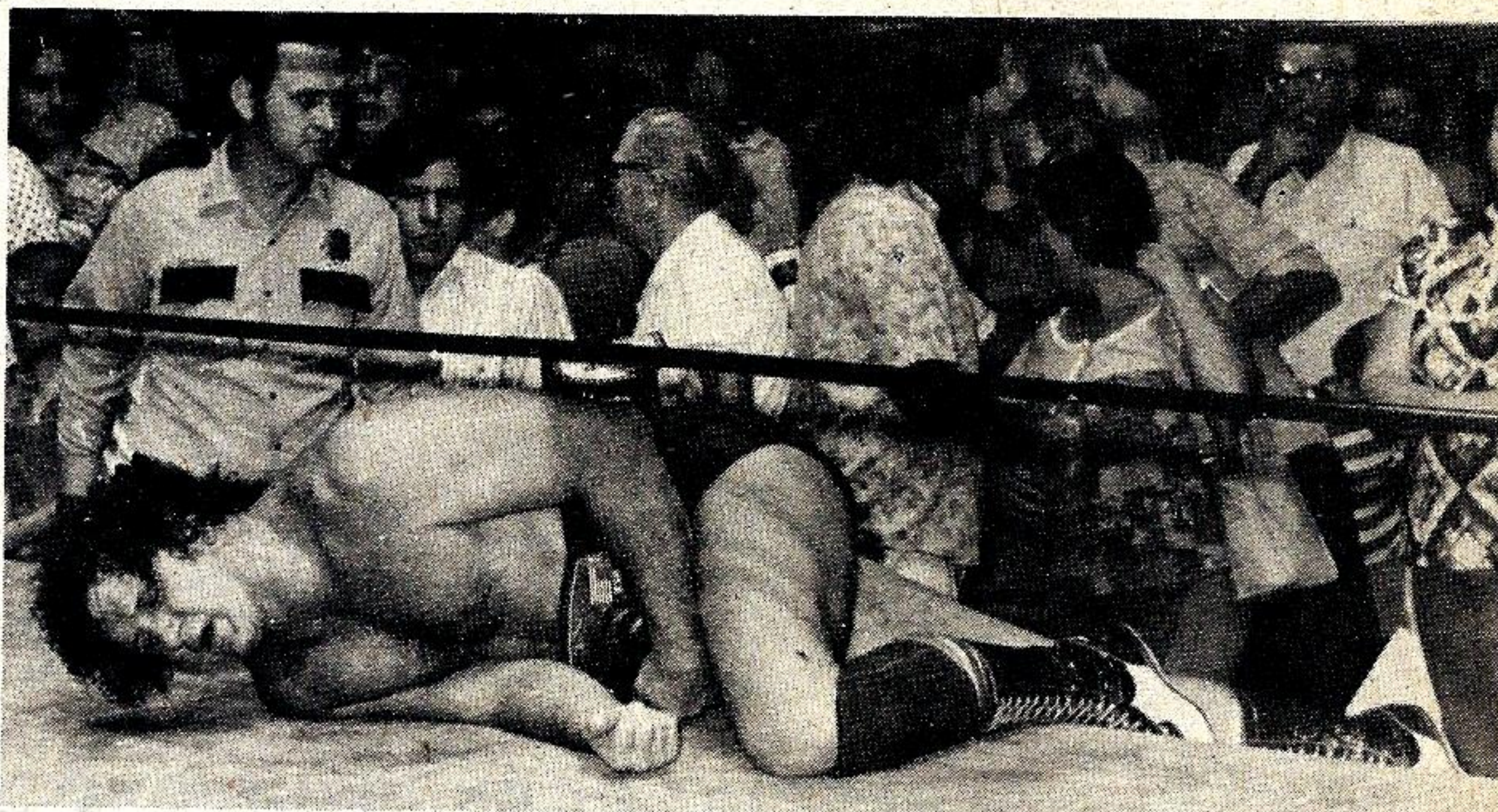
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Funk vs Lothario

(Continued from Page 34)



This brawl knows no bounds (left) as Funk tries to gain a lead outside the ring. Even Terry's best move, the spinning toe-hold, fails to end Jose's title bid (above). It's all over and Terry is a beaten man (below).



Terry of anything. He was sure, in his mind, he had to prepare for a match against Jack Brisco.

For the next few weeks, Terry spent all his spare time training for his supposed match against Jack Brisco. No one could convince him to do otherwise. None of his advisors could persuade him to change his plans and prepare for a match against Lothario.

By this time, Funk's mind was racing at top speed. He was sure Jack Brisco had hatched this devilish plot to take back the title. He was sure there was a conspiracy against him, in which the NWA, Jose Lothario, and even his closest advisors were involved.

When a man has become so obsessed with an idea that it

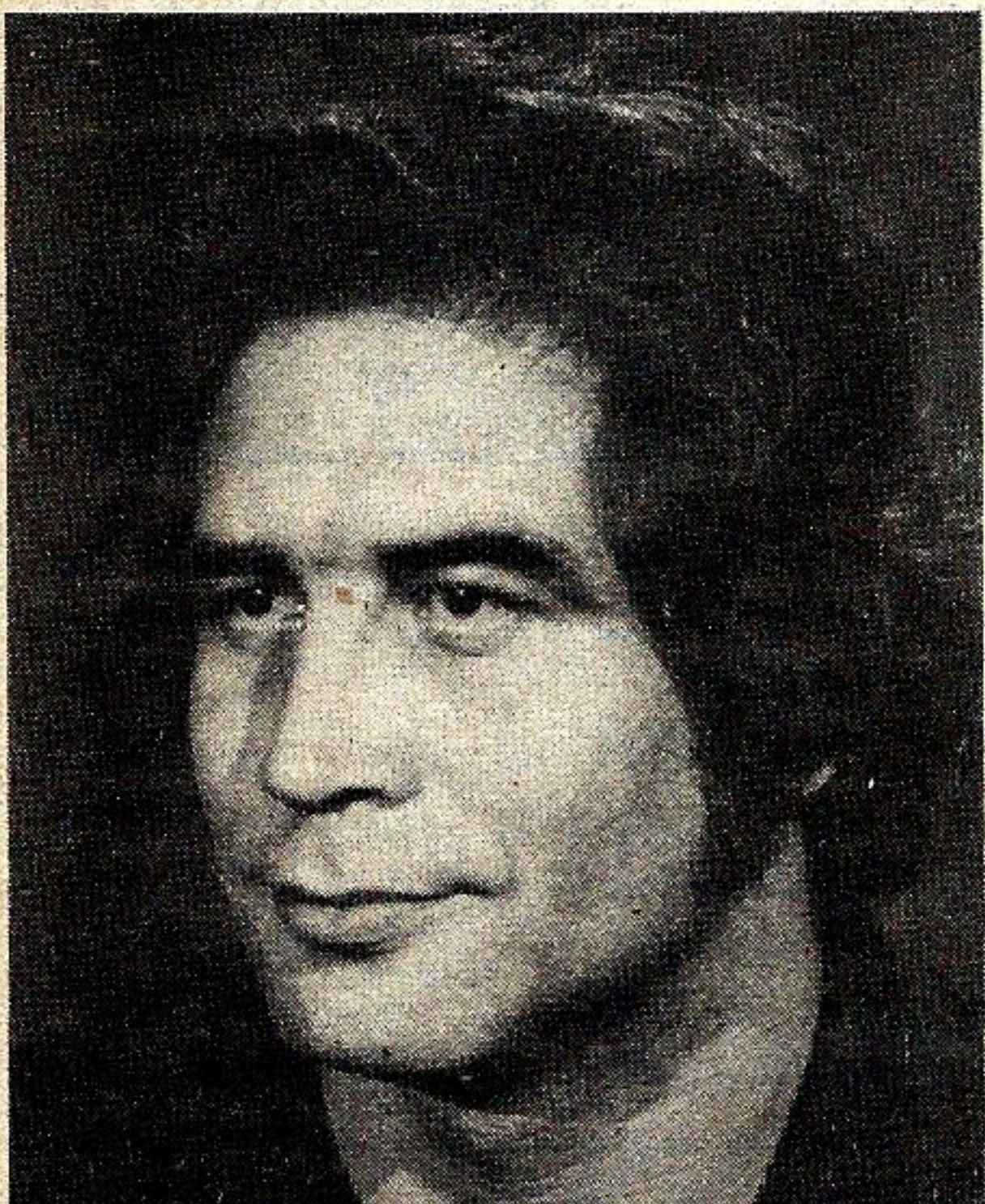
becomes all-consuming, he risks permanent damage to his psychological balance. Terry Funk had surely placed himself in such a position. And when confronted with the reality of a situation, he could either clear up the problem plaguing him, or go over the brink. Terry's advisors feared for the worst. The champion's mental instability was that evident to them.

The night of the match against Lothario, Funk came into the arena expecting to see Jack Brisco as his opponent. He did not listen to those who told him Lothario was in the arena, ready and waiting to take on the champion. He did not listen when everyone told him Brisco was just there to take notes on the match. He was convinced there

would be a substitution.

But it was not as Funk had expected. Lothario was in the ring, not Jack Brisco. And Jose was in top form that night. Terry, who had prepared for Jack Brisco, had to do all he could to handle Lothario. It was not an easy task for the NWA champion.

As far as Terry's mental balance was concerned, there was some question as to which way he would go. Some feared the shock of seeing Jose in the ring would be too much for Terry's troubled mind to handle. But Funk fooled them. As soon as he started wrestling, his mind seemed



Jack Brisco—the man who is making life miserable for NWA champion Terry Funk. Jack is still determined to regain the coveted title belt.

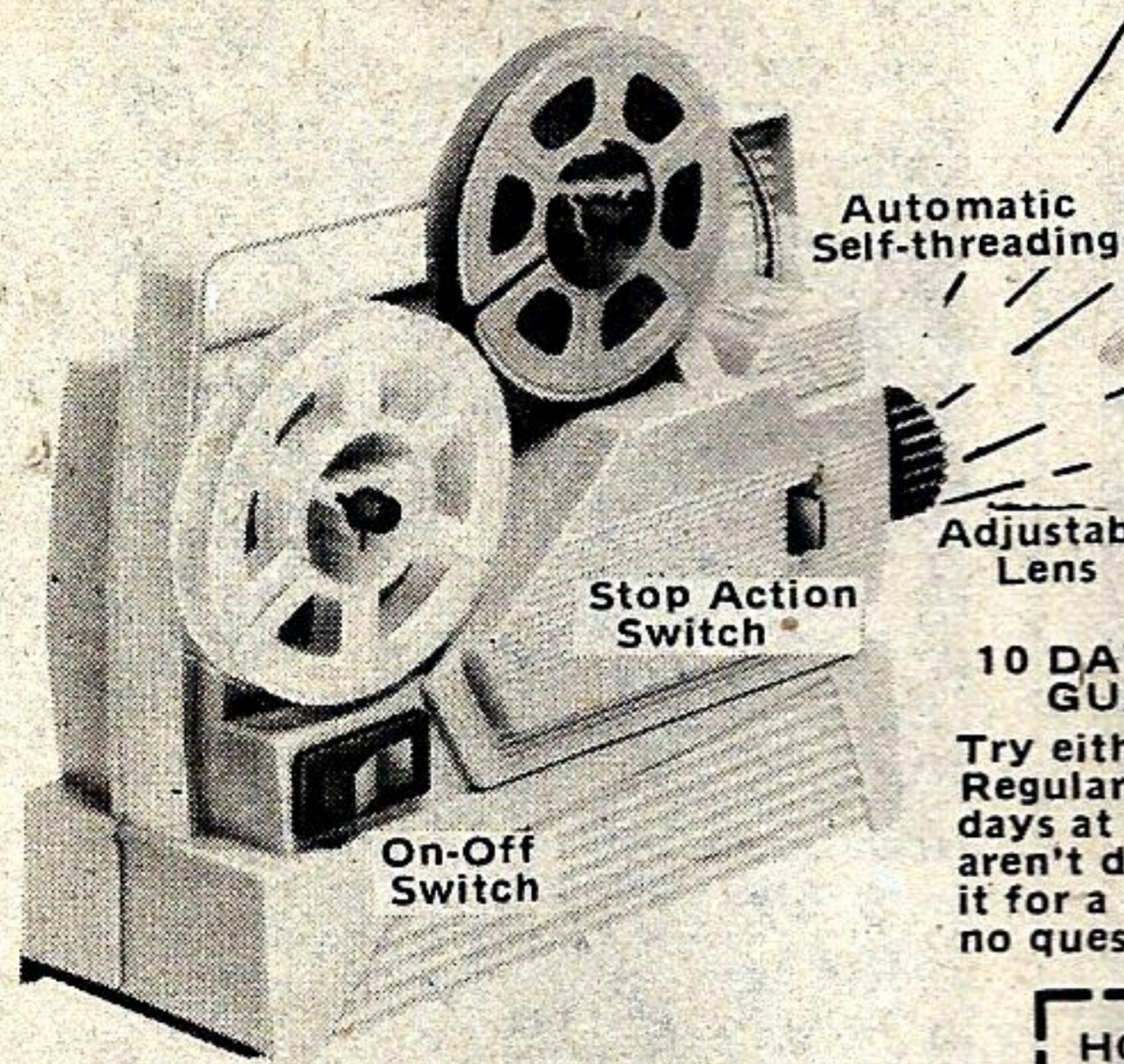
to be back to normal. Unfortunately, his body was not prepared for the trial of the match. His concentration was often broken by the sight of Jack Brisco in the audience. He was struggling to keep his title. There was only one option remaining. Terry had himself disqualified.

As Jose Lothario's hand was raised in victory, Terry sat there grimacing at himself and the delusions he had been under for so long. But nearby sat Jack Brisco, smiling at Terry. An inner wrath suddenly grew in Funk, but there was no way to release it. He rose, gathered up as much dignity as he possibly could, and strode back to his dressing room.

At least he still had his title. But his thinking too much had almost cost him that and everything else, including his sanity. That night Terry learned that not everyone is capable of motives as evil as his. It is a lesson he will not soon forget. ☐

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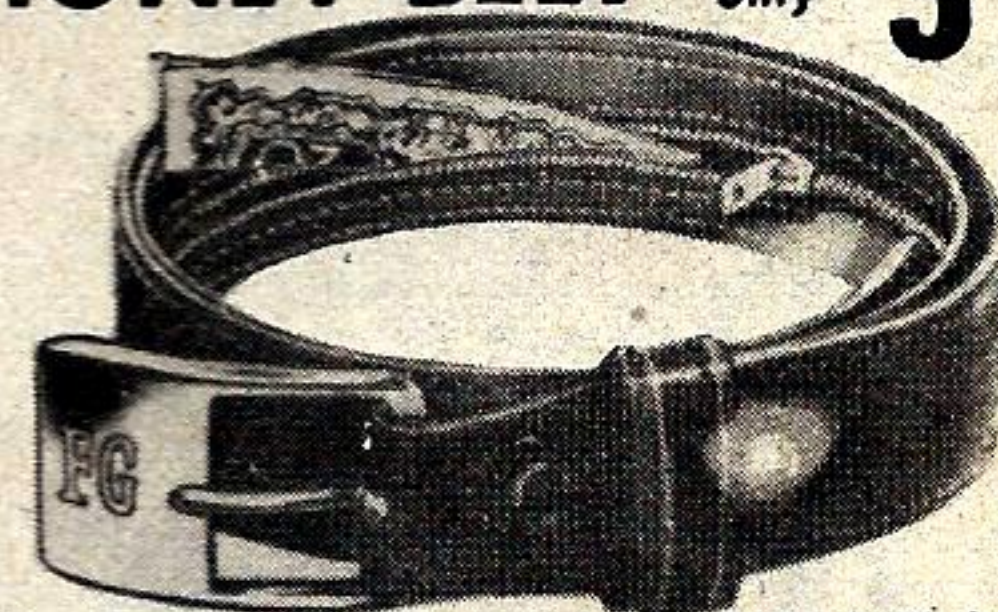
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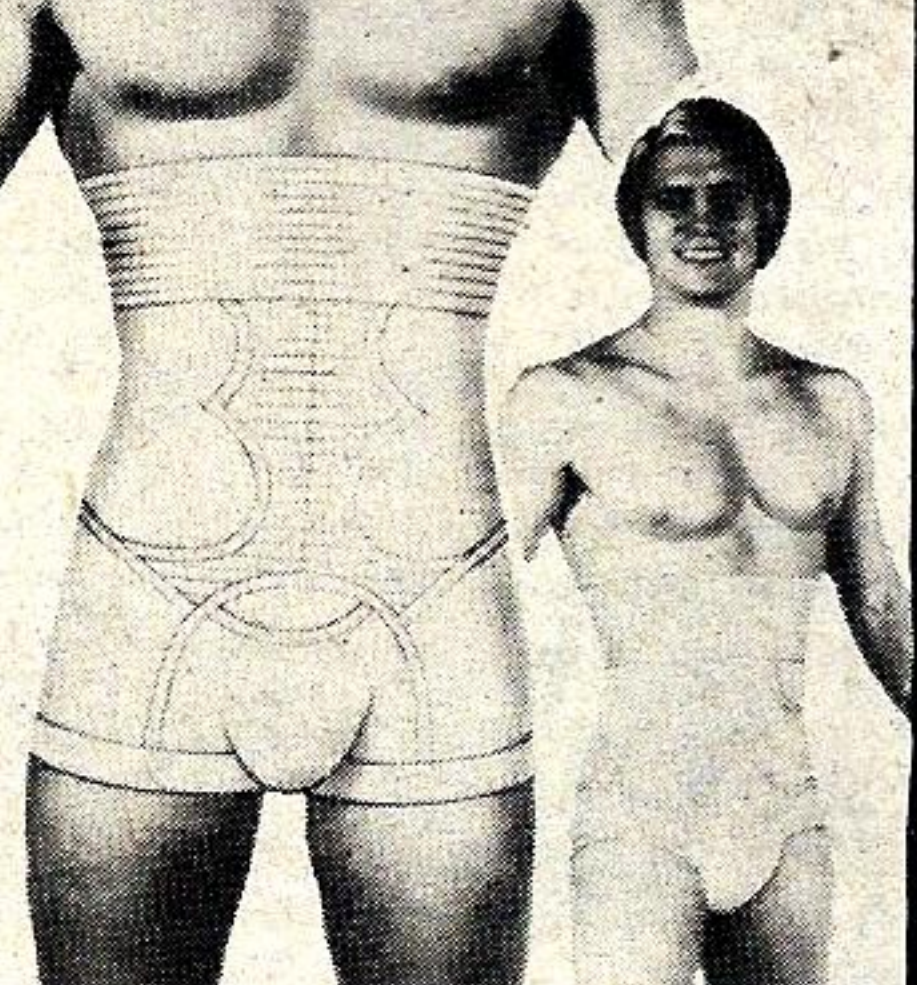
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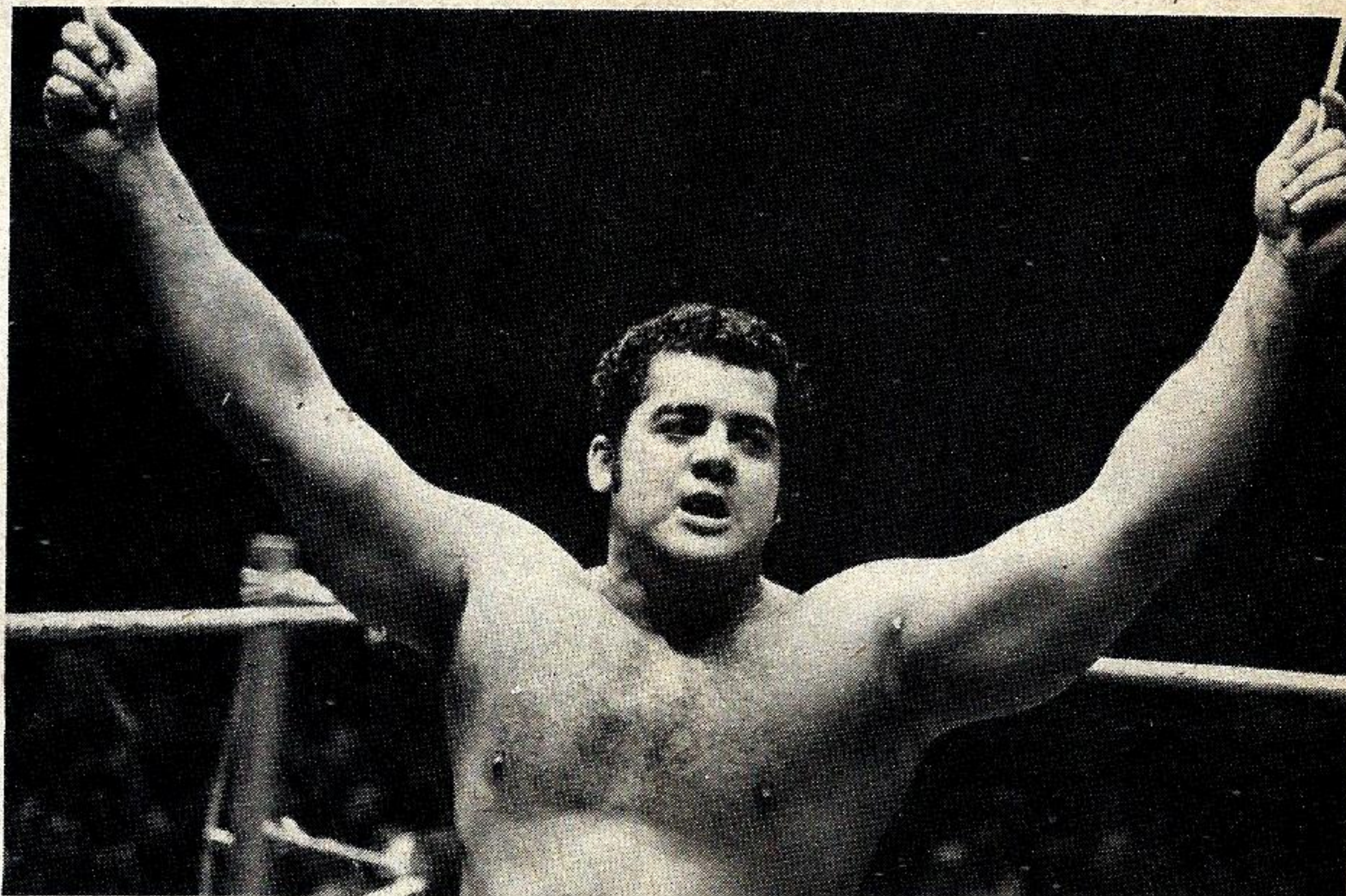
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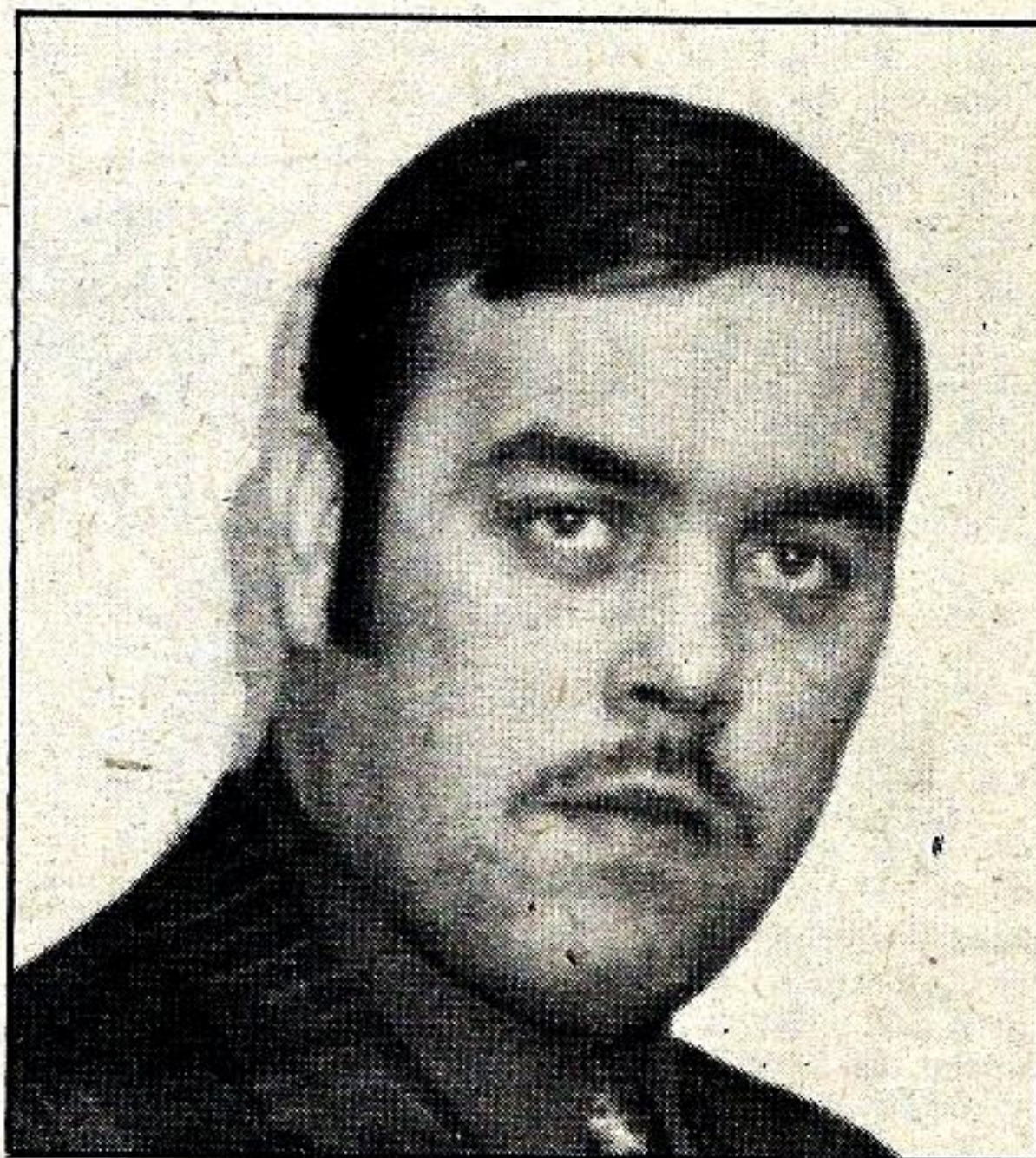
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YOU ASKED US

(Continued from Page 10)



Former WWF champion Pedro Morales
has his arms raised in victory (above).
Pedro is now trying to get the AWA title
from Nick Bockwinkel. Gary Hart (below)
claims he can manage in any town he
wants to.



think I could beat him. He has
many weak spots that are obvious
to me."

Q: Has Dusty Rhodes ever had a
match against Jim Valiant?—
Eddie Pucylowski, New Castle,
Delaware

A: Dusty wrestled Valiant when
both were in the AWA. "I handed
that creep's head to him!" boasts
Valiant. "He would be too
petrified to accept a return match
with me, daddy!"

Q: Ask Mr. Wrestling II who he
considers his toughest oppo-
nents—Mark Merritt, Fitzgerald,
Georgia

A: "Dick Slater, Stan Stasiak and
Moondog Mayne stand out in my
mind as the toughest recent
opponents I have faced," noted
the masked fan favorite.

Q: When is Pedro Morales coming
back to the east coast?—Joel
Chu, Brooklyn, New York

A: Pedro, now wrestling in the AWA
says, "Right now I want to wrestle
Nick Bockwinkel for the AWA
title. I do not know when I will be
back east, but I do want to say
I think of my fans in the east often
and miss them very much!"

Q: Is it true Gary Hart was
suspended from managing in
Louisiana?—Curtis L. Butler,
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

A: "That is an ugly rumor!" blasts
Hart. "I can manage anywhere I
please. The people in Louisiana
do not deserve to have my
superior talent in their state. I am
too good for them!" □

Q: I would like to know what ever
happened to the tag team "The
Arabians" Abdul and Gamal.
They wrestled in the New York
area about 12 years ago—
Nicholas Cirillo, Ridgewood,
New York

A: The last report we have on the
Arabians says they returned to
their homeland having retired
from the sport.

Q: Is it true Bruno Sammartino is
afraid to wrestle Antonio
Inoki?—Alfred Pate, Pensacola,
Florida

A: "Of course not!" Bruno exclaims.
"I am not afraid to wrestle any-
one, especially Inoki. Sure he is a
fine wrestler, but personally, I

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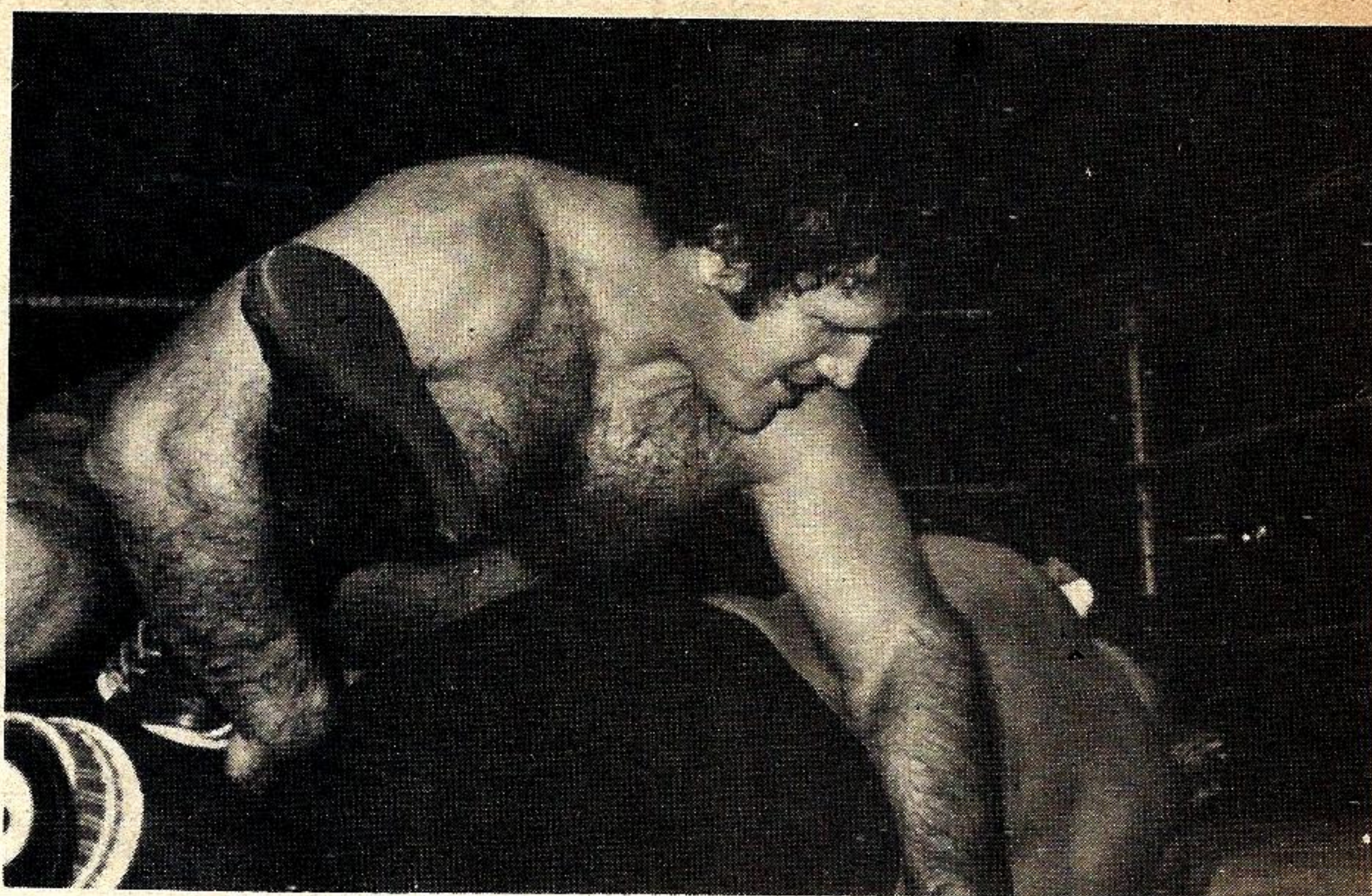
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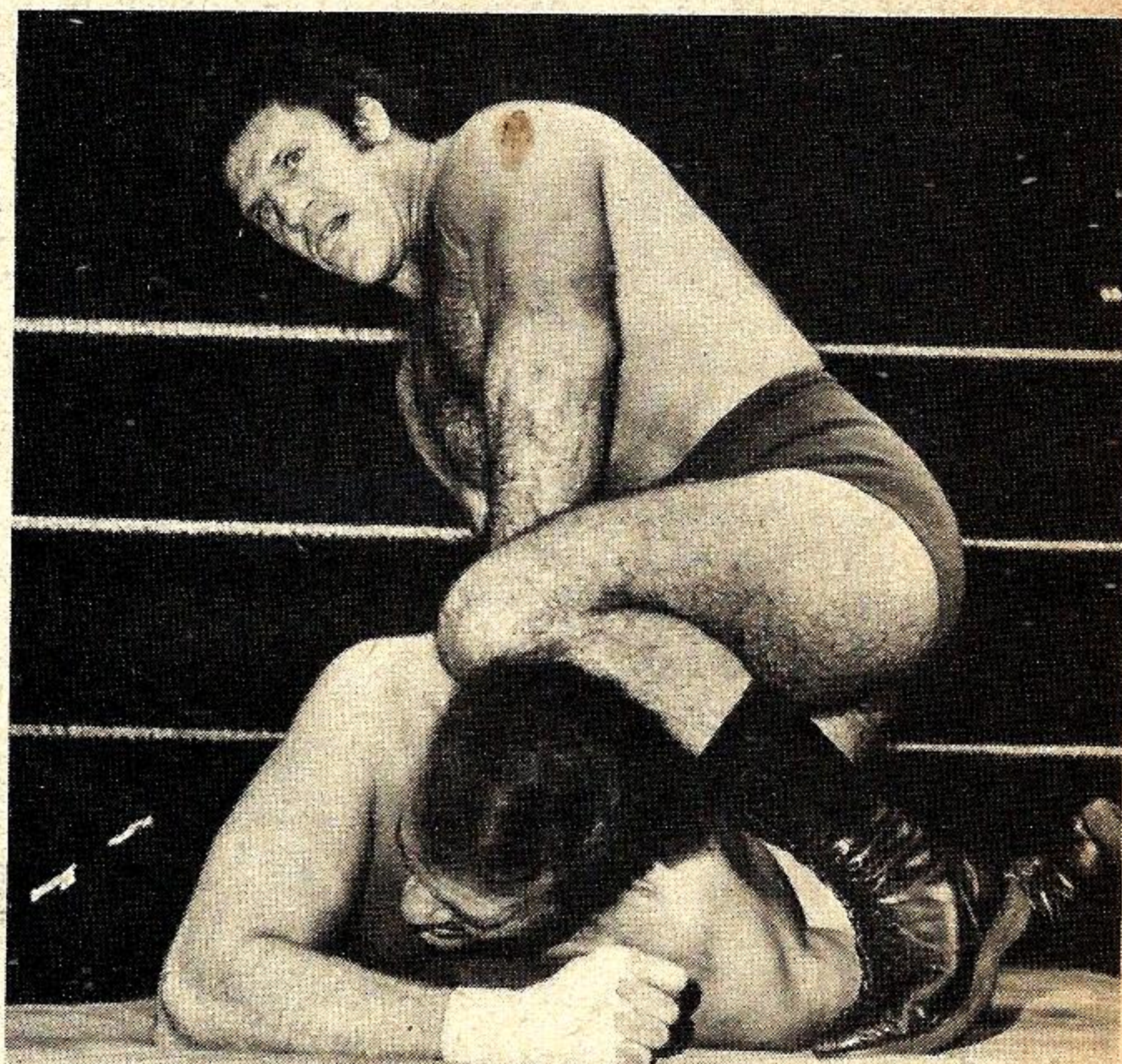
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STASIAK — SAMMARTINO

(Continued from Page 37)



Another toehold by Bruno (above) has Stan on the verge of crying "Uncle!" This time it's a hammerlock that has the challenger in a lot of trouble (right). Stasiak feels he could have pinned Bruno and won the belt during this controversial title match. Bruno says his title was never in jeopardy.



Stasiak thanked the doctor, wrote out a check for his services, and told him to have the woman at the wrestler's entrance to Madison Square Garden at 5 P.M.

At the appointed time, the woman was there. Stasiak was shame-faced. He never expected she would actually appear. The woman was hoping Bruno would be there to meet her. But Stasiak made sure Sammartino was nowhere to be found.

So it was Stasiak rather than Sammartino who met this defeated old woman at the door. Tears streamed down her wrinkled face as she realized Sammartino wouldn't be there. In the last few years, too many people hadn't been there.

"I'm sorry," Stasiak said, wishing he

were anyplace else but there. "It's just one of those things. I'm sorry."

"It's okay," the ancient lady managed to say through her sniffing. "He's a champion. All I want to know is that he's all right. I want to know he'll remain champion."

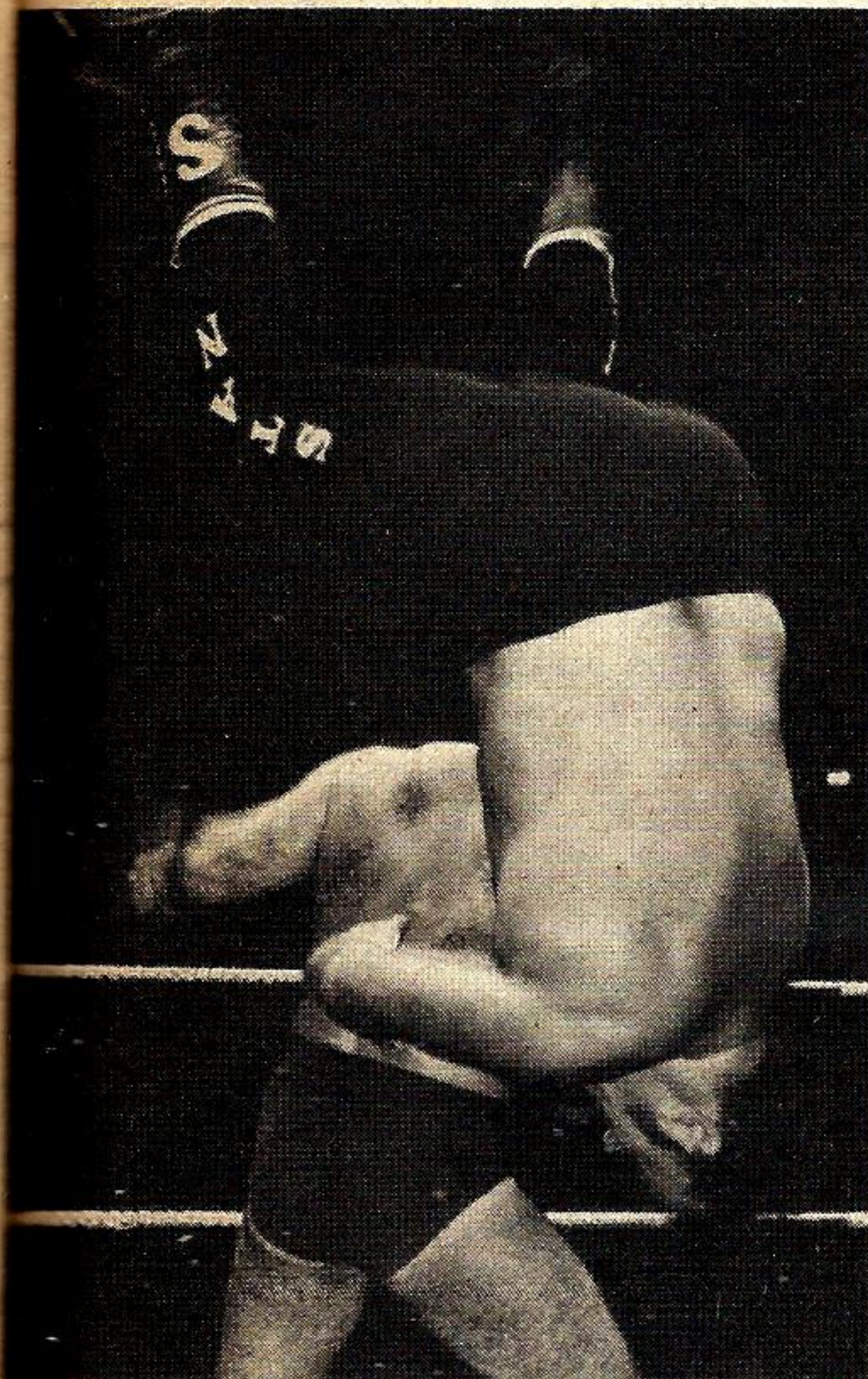
Stan said nothing as he handed the woman her ringside ticket.

The match that night was a brawl. The two men battled with cold fury, using wits and brute strength. The fans cheered wildly at each encounter praying for Sammartino and damning Stasiak. All but the broken old woman, who just sat there in awe of Sammartino.

Finally, a bloody Stasiak and a battered Sammartino toppled from the ring. The two men belted each

other as they tried to climb back through the ropes. Stasiak felt he could pin Sammartino and take the title if they both got back into the ring. Bruno was exhausted, probably a little more so than Stan. The challenger was scampering back into the ring, knowing Sammartino's pride would force him back into disastrous combat. Then Stasiak saw the old woman. Once again, tears dripped down her face.

Stasiak looked at this beaten woman, deserted by friends and hope.



After whipping Stasiak into the ropes, Bruno backdrops him, sending Stasiak crashing to the mat.

And for the first time in his life, Stasiak believed there might be something more important than winning a title. He had the power to spare this pathetic creature one more heartbreak.

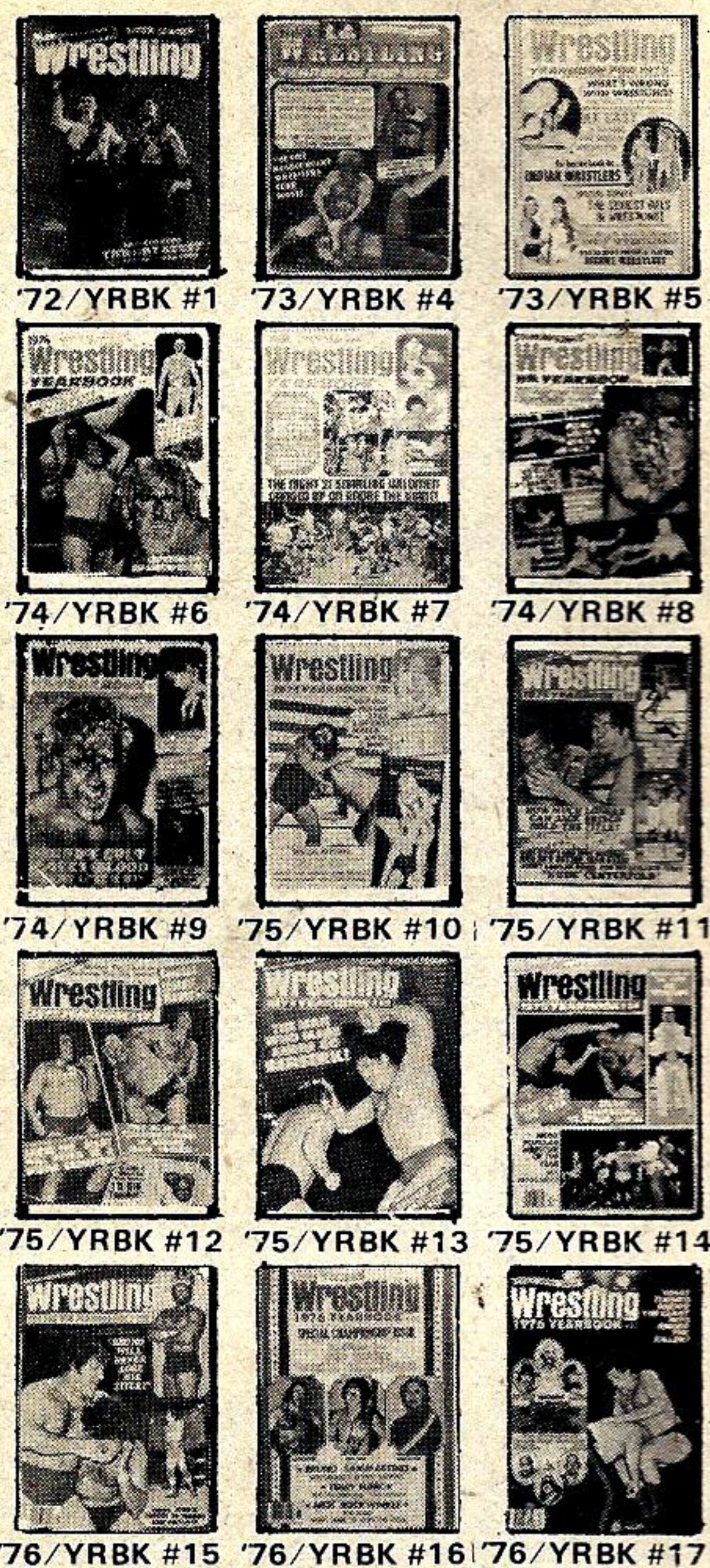
A quick punch to Sammartino's head sent the champion reeling. Stasiak leaped in the ring. He got the victory—Sammartino having been counted out—but he didn't win the championship.

No one in the arena, including Sammartino, knew why Stasiak had done something that had seemed so "stupid." Even the aged lady, walking out to the streets, didn't know the reason.

The next day, Stasiak received by messenger the check he had given the doctor. It was torn in half. □

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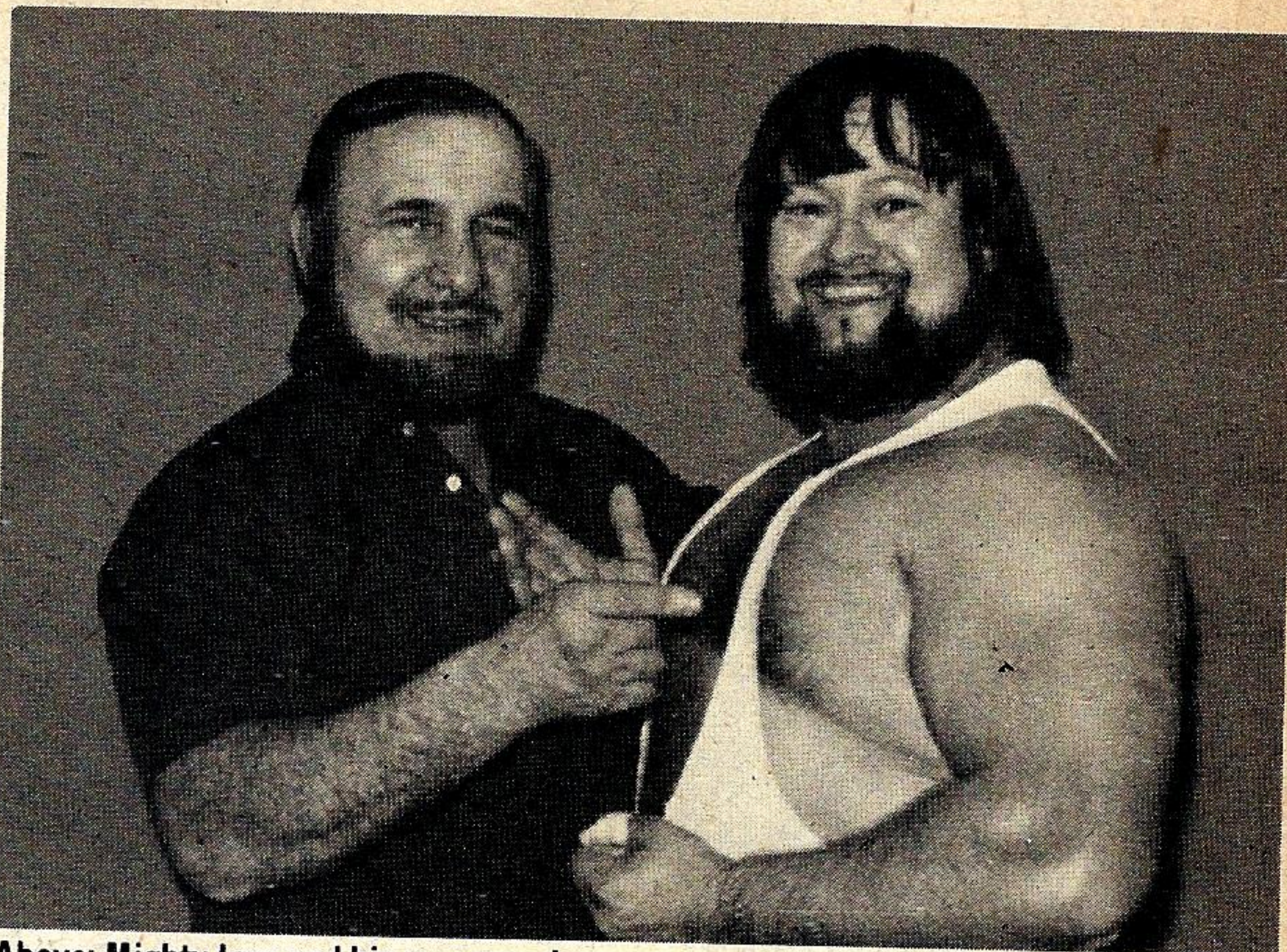
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CORRESPONDENT REPORTS

(Continued from Page 12)



Above: Mighty Igor and his manager, Ivan Kalmikoff, are delighted after the grappler's latest successful bout. Below: Ivan Putski has taken a lot of punishment over the years, most recently against Stan Hansen.



with Gordman by mistake, freeing Jose and sending Gordman reeling. It was simple then for Jose to finish off his foe. Once again, Hart was thwarted in driving Lothario from the area.

GEORGIA GRAPPLING

By Lynn Cantrell

The citizens of Rome were delighted by a raging battle between Mighty Igor and Stomper. The Polish mat star

proved his courage as well as ability when he took an incredible amount of punishment from his foe and the interference of Dick Slater. Before Slater rushed in however, Igor was having a fine time, actually laughing at Stomper's attempts to injure him! But when Slater joined Stomper, the laughter died. It looked like Igor was finished until help in the form of Porkchop Cash arrived. Slater and Stomper had no stomach for a battle with the sides evenly matched, and they quickly fled to the dressing room. The victory, due to disqualification, went to Mighty Igor, much to the fans' approval.

NEW YORK WRESTLING

By Pete and Steve Planamenta

Westchester County Center fans were treated to a spectacle of grueling action as Ivan Putski took on Stan Hansen in a savage revenge match. The two men were at each other from the opening moments. Theirs was a cold fury, their tempers checked to stop from making restless mistakes. Finally, Ivan captured Hansen in a bearhug. Hansen raked Putski's eyes, forcing Stan's release. Undaunted, Ivan snared Hansen again in the bearhug. Again, Hansen tore into Putski's eyes. This time Putski was in agony and stumbled into the ropes. Hansen leaped on his foe and began to choke him. When Stan refused to release the illegal hold, the referee disqualified Hansen and gave the match to Putski.

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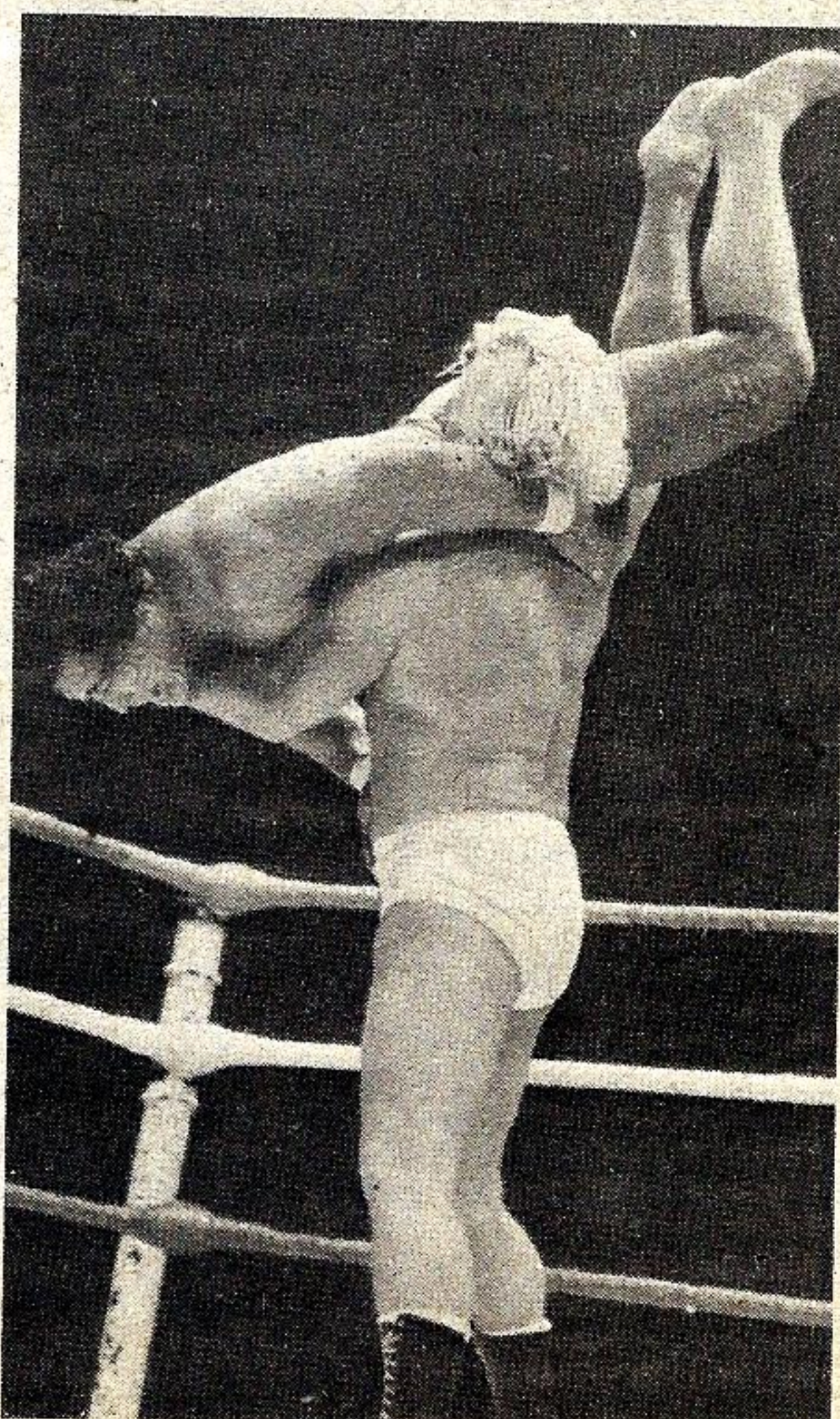
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NICK BOCKWINKLE

(Continued from Page 33)



Maivia chops Bockwinkle (above) in what became one of Nick's hardest title bouts. Nick scoops Maivia up and prepares to slam him to the canvas (below).



Bobby Heenan do the talking. [For complete details of Heenan's incredible contract with Bockwinkle, see **INSIDE WRESTLING**/March 1977.]

So the wrestlers get anxious for a title shot. All the matches are becoming furious contests; with each man knowing the big prize could fall before he gets a chance at it. Every man is everyone else's enemy. Nobody's complaining, though. They all like the taste of title too much.

Yet, Bockwinkle clings to his crown tenaciously, scraping through one bout after another. There's no greatness in his victories, no glory in his narrow escapes from defeat. He's a man on the run, fleeing those who stalk his every move. Somehow, he manages to survive.

Nick survived Maivia's first title bid, though just barely. It was an upsetting exhibition for all those who respect the sport. Maivia grappled with scientific beauty, proving himself worthy of the title. Bockwinkle used every dirty trick

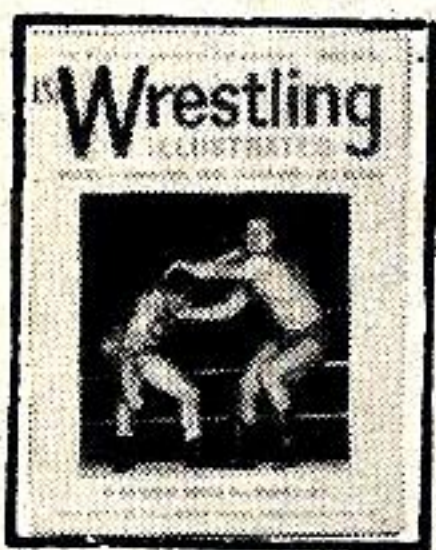
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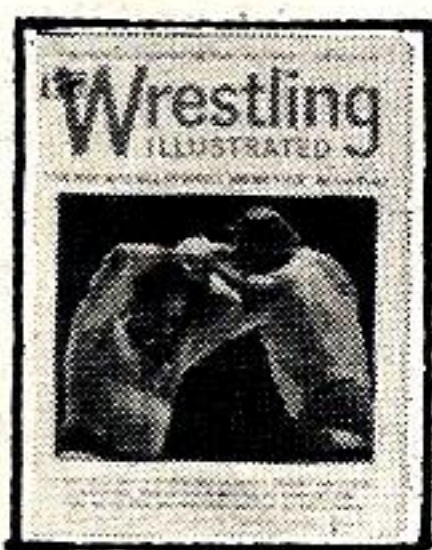
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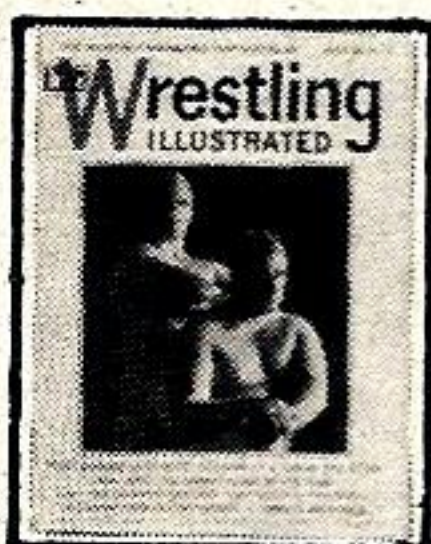
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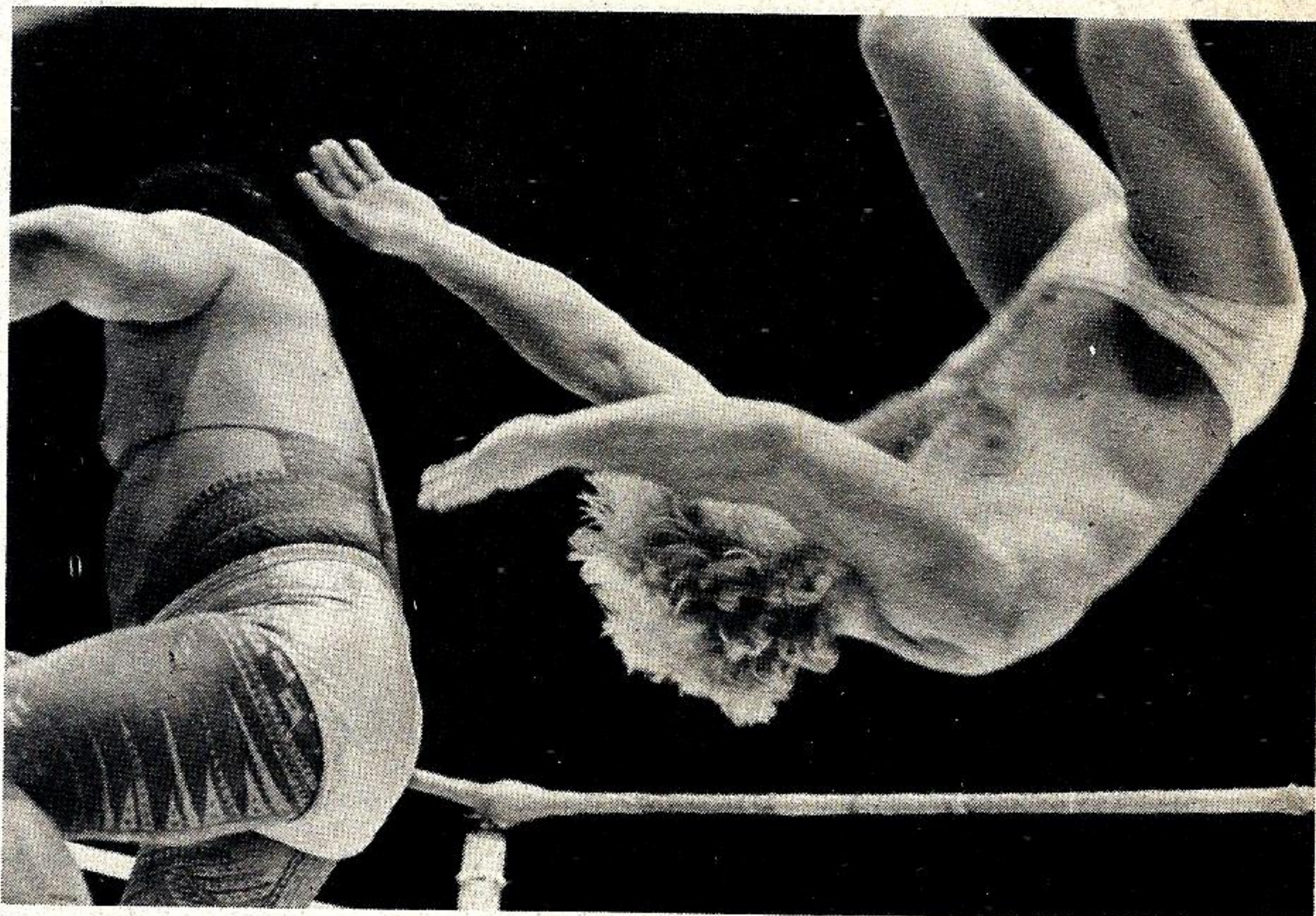
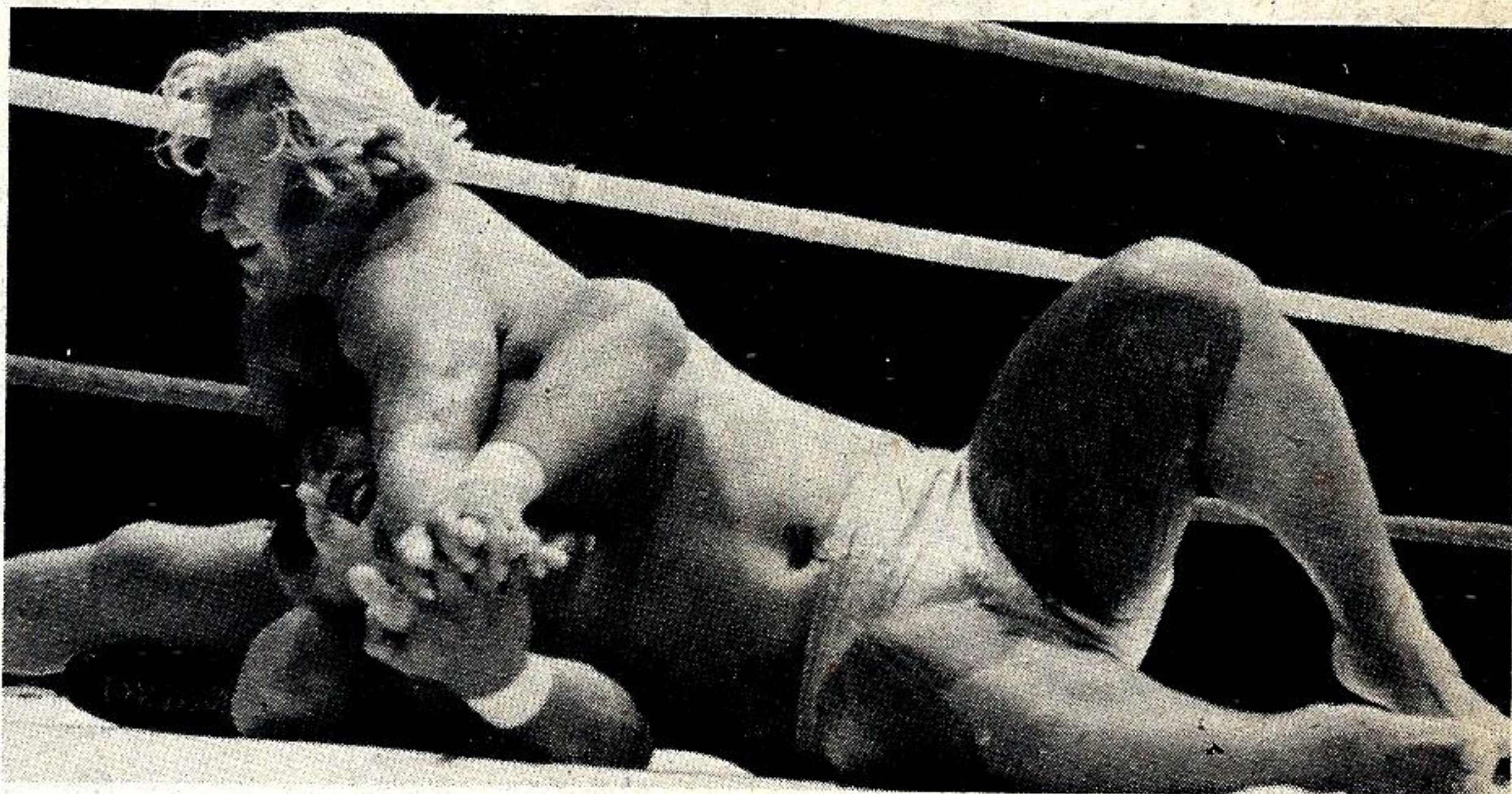
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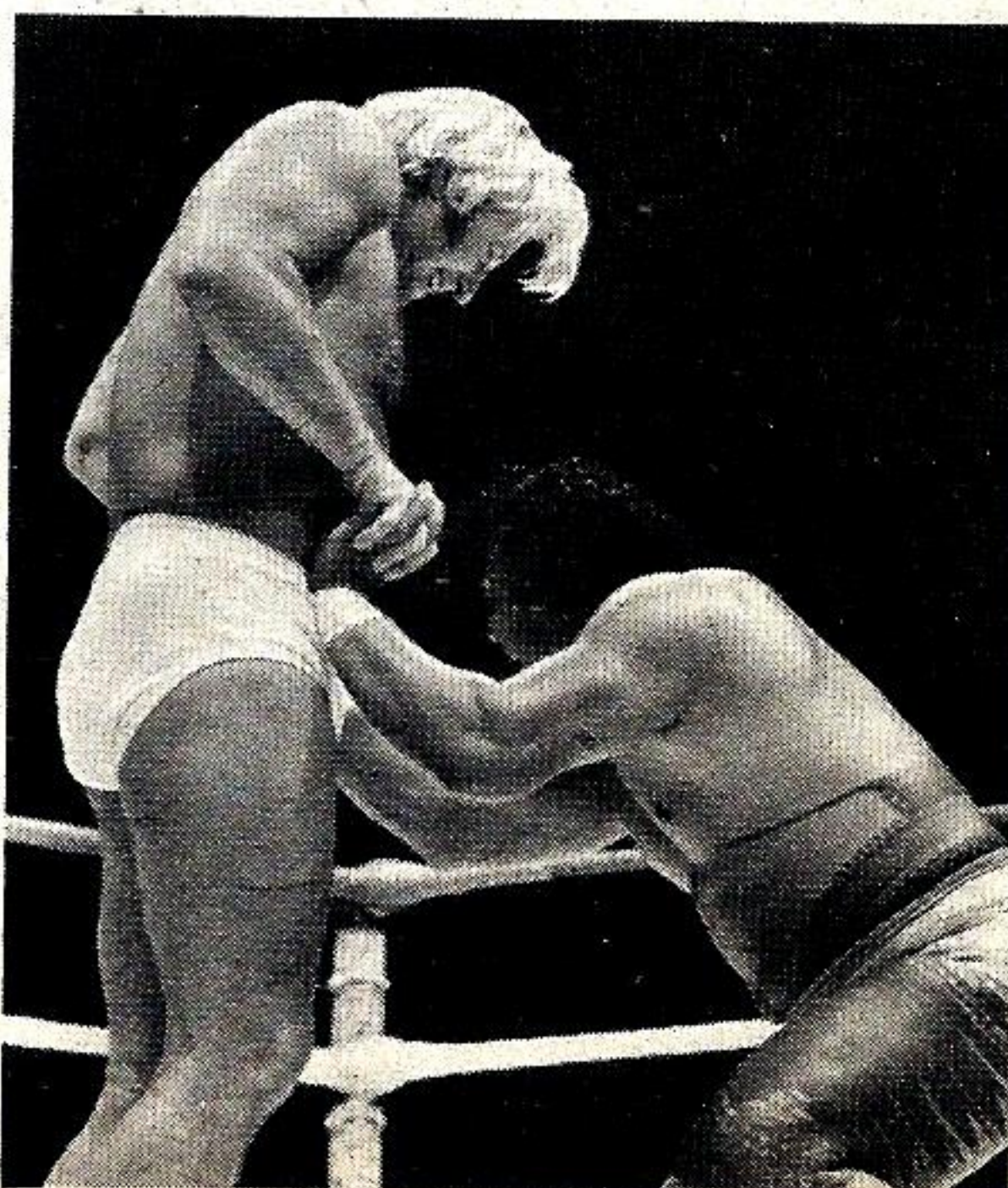
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NICK BOCKWINKLE

(Continued from Page 62)



Top: It's a chinlock, not a choke, and Peter Maivia is having a hard time escaping from it. Above: Nick flies through the air as Maivia senses victory soon. Below: In a battle of fingerlocks, the champion overpowers the challenger.



possible to thwart Peter's assault. It was the desperate defense of a man without confidence or pride.

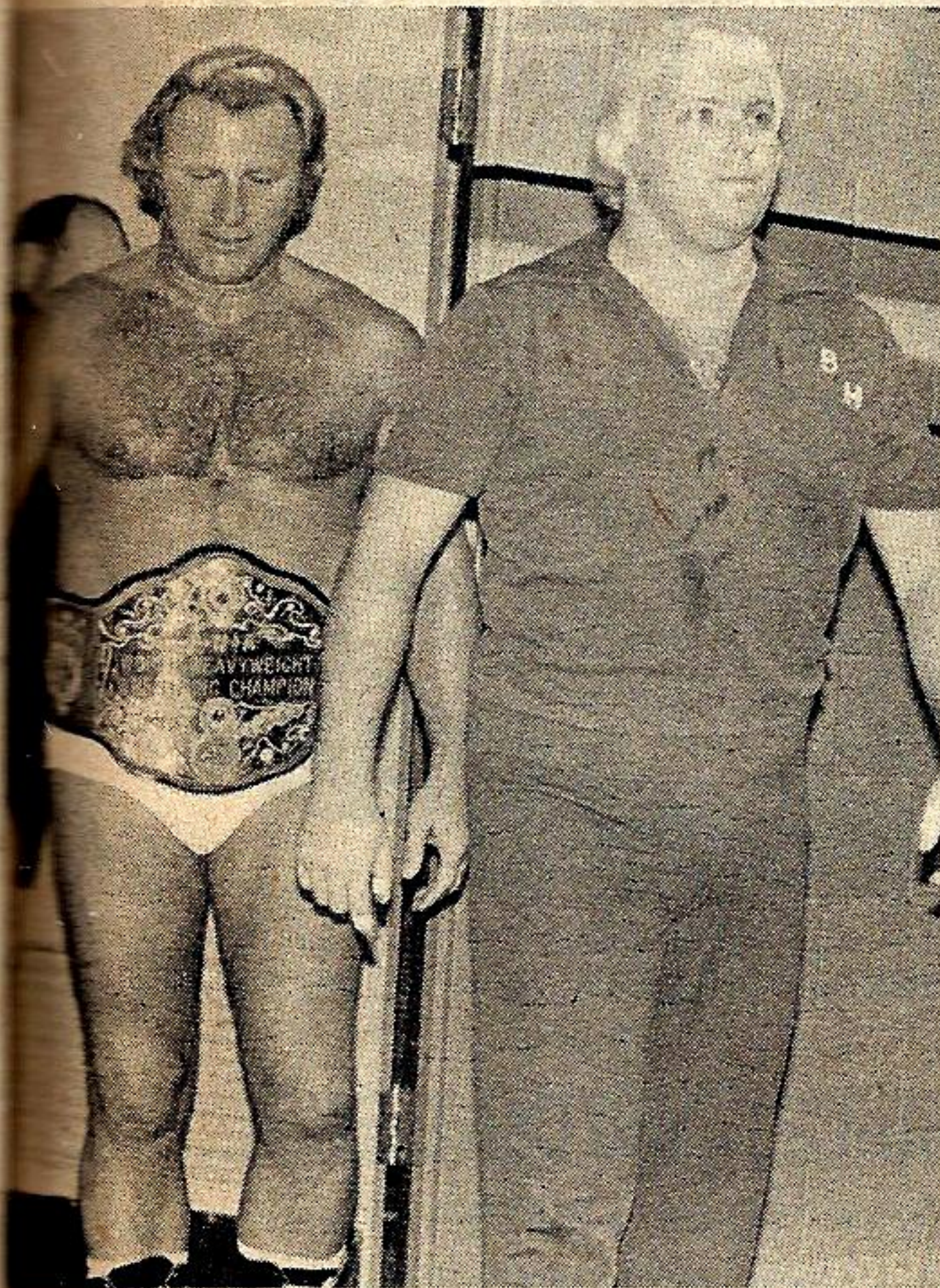
"I couldn't believe it," Maivia said after the match, "he doesn't really want to be champion. For some reason, he feels the need to defend his title, but he doesn't really want to be champion. It's hard to explain, and almost as hard to understand."

"There were things he did in the match that were just crazy. A champion has to have a certain amount of knowledge. You can't help but get it. Yet, Bockwinkel refused time and time again to take advantage of it. It was crazy."

"I didn't wrestle my best. I was over-anxious, impatient to win the title. I made some glaring mistakes. Bockwinkel should have been able to kill me. I mean, as soon as I made them I thought I was doomed. And it would have given Nick an honorable victory over me."

"But he didn't take advantage of it! I mean these were obvious things he ignored. He let me off to win a cheap victory. He preferred it that way. He wants his championship to go down as the most reprehensible in AWA history. What we're seeing is the protracted suicide of Nick Bockwinkle's dignity.

"He can't be champion much longer. No way! Sooner or later, he has to stop hating his title enough to try to bring it some respect. And



Their arguments left in the dressing room, Heenan escorts Nick Bockwinkle to the ring to do battle.

once he does that, once he stops seeking refuge in shoddy tricks, he'll be finished. He doesn't care enough about his title to really defend it. He hates it and hates himself.

"When I first came to the AWA," Maivia concluded, "all I wanted was a shot at Bockwinkle's title. I didn't care about him, only about the glory. I still care about the glory, still want the title more than anything, but there's something else. I feel sorry for Nick Bockwinkle. I've never hated anything as much as Bockwinkle hates himself. It's enough to make you cry."

Peter will still go after the AWA title with total determination. So will many other top athletes. Bockwinkle's crown sits restlessly upon his head. When it does fall, Nick may be the happiest to see it topple.

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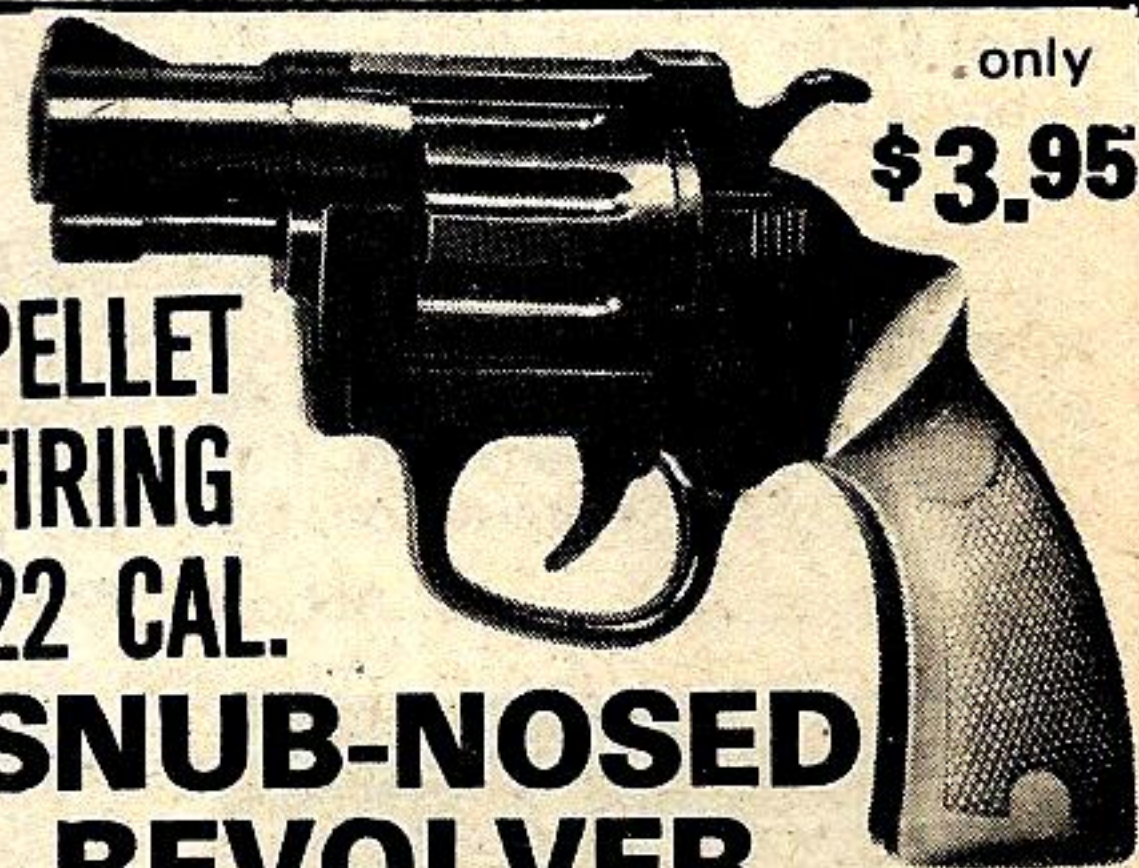
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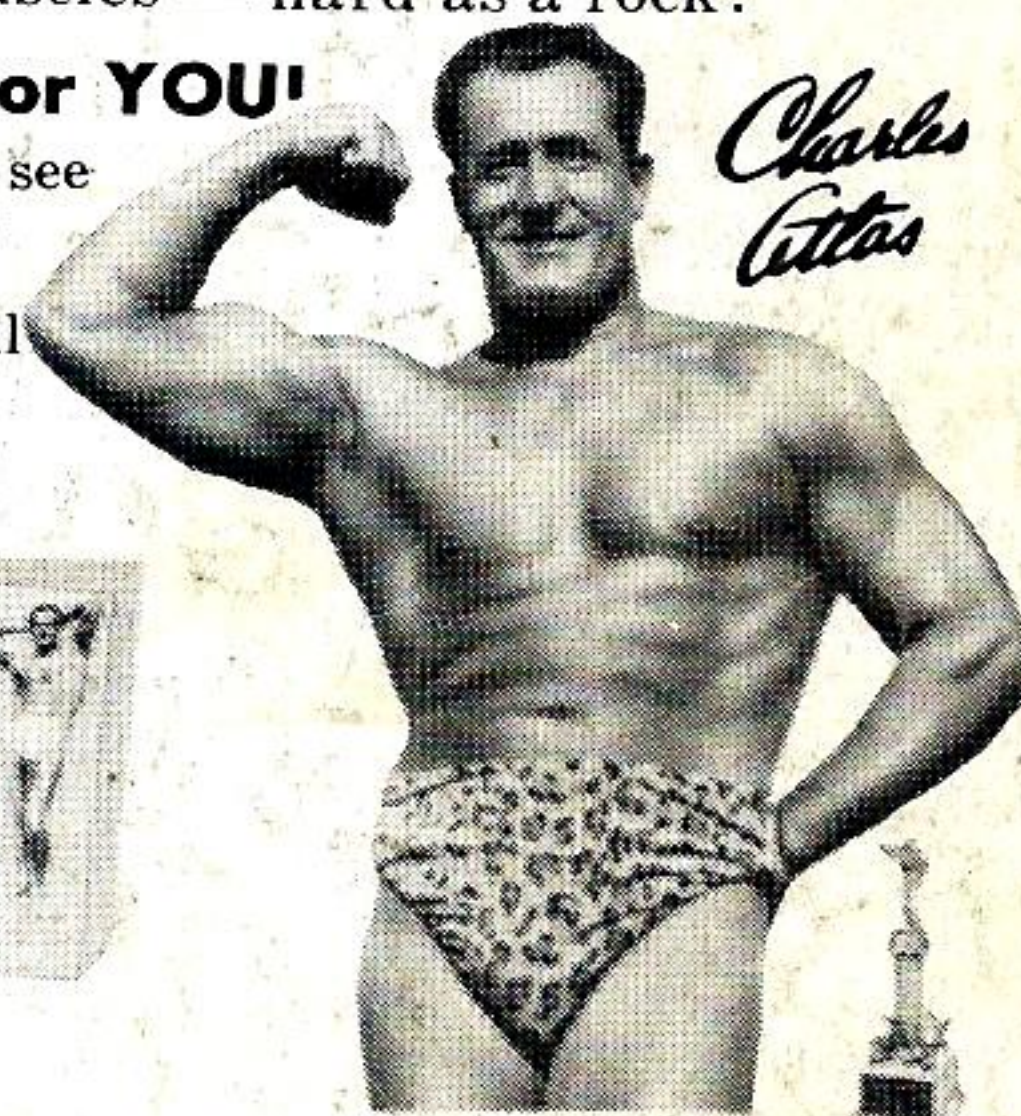
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